Social Consciousness in JAINISM

Shugan C. Jain
Prakash C. Jain

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Jainism is often considered as an "other worldly" religion which puts great emphasis on asceticism and salvation. This is particularly thought so about Digambar Jainism. However, asceticism in Shvetambar as well as Digambar Jainism is only one side of the proverbial coin – the other being the fact that Jainism equally emphasizes the "in worldly" things, the individual wellbeing and human welfare in society. The Jain religious values and ethics, specially *ahimsa* and *aparigraha* and the philosophical doctrines of *karma*, *anekantvaad* and *syadvaad* are all geared to a better social as well as individual life. This book on Jainism and social consciousness is illustrative of this reality. It is mainly due to this social consciousness inherent in Jainism that the Jains have been able to contribute immensely to the richness of Indian economic, cultural and social life over the millennia.

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Preface

Jainism is projected as an ascetic religion only. It is often said by non-Jain scholars that it is very difficult to practice Jain way of life in 21st century. Most Jains however believe that Jainism, with its four-fold organization of followers, provides a very positive, meaningful and practical approach for Jains to live a peaceful, happy, prosperous and socially sensitive and involved community life. In order to further explore this theme International School for Jain Studies, in association with leading universities of India and Canada, organized a series of national seminars (in ten major cities /Jain centres in India) & in Ottawa, Canada. These seminars were held in the months of February-March, 2010 in India and in August, 2010 in Canada as per following schedule:

Place	Institution	Date	Coordinator
Jaipur	University of Rajasthan	16th February	Prof. Kusum Jain
Nagpur		18th February	Dr. Mrs. Manju Jain
Mumbai	University of Mumbai	21st February	Prof. Meenal Katarnikar
Mumbai	K.J. Somaiya	22nd February	Dr. Geeta Mehta
Bangalore	Jain University	24th Febuary	Prof. N. Chooda-mani
Chennai	University of Chennai	26th February	Prof. Priyadarshana Jain
Indore	Kund Kund Gyanpeeth	28th February	Dr. Anupam Jain
Varanasi	Parshwanath Vidyapeeth	5th March	
Moradabad	TMU	7th March	Prof. R. K. Mittal
Delhi	Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidya-peetha	8th March	Prof. Veer Sagar Jain
Ottawa	University of Ottawa	27th August	Prof. Anne Vallely

ISJS invited papers from scholars, Jain community leaders, heads of Jain Social organizations and practitioners associated with Jain studies. They were asked to send their papers on any one or more topics indicated below:

A. Jain doctrinal principles and their applications in social life

- Tirathankaras and their social reforms.
- Ahinsa and its applications in social implementation (compassion /friendship/forgiveness / tolerance/ equality etc (jiyo aur Jino do, parasparopragraha jivanam etc as given in Jain texts).
- Anekanta and its applications for conflict resolution and social harmony, human rights, animal rights, organization & management etc
- Aparigraha as a concept to enhance cooperation amongst fellow beings. Limitation of wants /consumption etc, charity and social uplift. Some associated concepts are sanyama, sanvara, dana
- Abstinence and its role in social life. An exploration of the observance of essential duties and minor vows as prescribed for householders, their interpretation for social harmony and personal development
- Doctrine of karma and its relationship with purposeful and socially beneficial activities. Exploration of the emphasis on duty above right, on obligation rather than grace. Concept of free will and freedom.
- Concept of penance with special reference to food intake, modesty, service, repentance, meditation and self study etc.
- Daily Jains prayers /contemplations etc.

B. Contributions of Jains and Jain doctrine to activities of social, economic and cultural importance.

- Seeds for the development of Science / technology / Mathematics / Biology / Medicine.
- Art, temples, literature
- Health, education, economy, organization and management of business, governance and ecology
- Social services such as child / destitute care / rest homes /
- Community building and peaceful resolution of social conflicts

C. Case studies

- Significant institutions / individuals engaged in activities at A. (e.g. FJEI, Mahavir Vikanka, Educational societies of Maharashtra and elsewhere running several hundred schools, Shrawanbelgola; Bhamasha, Chamunda Rai, Chandragupta Maurya, Kharvela; Jain prime ministers in Jaipur dynasty, Six CMs of MP, D S
- Kothari, Sarabhai, Walchand etc)
- Contributions by Jains in regions like South or specific state, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Bundelkhand, Jharkhand, MP etc.)

D. Statistical reports/presentation

- Census figures to establish numbers and uniqueness of Jains
- Institutions and contributions
- Demographic and sociological studies

Needless to say, a large number of papers and abstracts were received for presentation at these seminars. Some of these papers were directly relevant to the proposed theme, and were of appropriate length as well. Academic standard of the articles had also to be taken into account. With these considerations in mind 17 articles were selected for the present anthology. They represent numerous aspects of social consciousness ranging from education, health care, social welfare and value system to architecture, ecology and even end-of-life care.

Organizing these seminars at different places was a mammoth task. During the course of organizing the seminars we incurred the debt of a number of people, especially the coordinators of the seminars. We sincerely express our gratitude to all of them. We are also thankful to all the contributors of articles contained in this volume.

We also thank the scholars who presented very good papers in these seminars but the same could not be included here due to management constraints. A note of thanks is due to Dr. Anne Vallely of the University of Ottawa who organized the international seminar at her university. Thanks are also due to ISJS staff, particularly Mr. Sushil Jana, who presently did all word processing and electronic compiling of the seminar proceedings.

Shugan C. Jain
New Delhi

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1

Social Consciousness, Its Origin and Rejuvenation in Jainism

Shugan C Jain

1.1 Social Consciousness

Social consciousness[1] is consciousness shared within a society[2]. It can also be defined as social awareness; to be aware of the problems that different societies and communities[3] face on a day-to-day basis; to be conscious of the difficulties and hardships of society. Some people define social consciousness as a society's consciousness of itself.[4] Others argue against this definition, saying that society does not have a mind of its own, and therefore is not conscious: rather, the people that make up society are individually conscious.[5] Social consciousness is similar to collective consciousness.[6] In Jain philosophy society not only encompasses human beings but the entire eco-system also consisting of earth, plant, air, fire and water bodied living beings and animal kingdom. Similarly Jains describe consciousness as the distinguishing characteristic of living beings and it manifests as *darśana* (intuition or awareness) and *jñāna* (knowledge).[7]

Many studies have been done to examine the roots of social consciousness. It is believed to arise as a response to social injustice experienced by the individual or in the lives of others around the individual. There are three levels of social consciousness, namely acquired, awakened, and expanded.[8]

Social consciousness brings moral implications. Often, people with an awakened social consciousness become socially active. A socially conscious person tends to be empathetic towards others regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, class, or sexual identity. In the context of Jainism, work by late Professor Vilas A. Sangave (formerly of sociology department at Shivaji University,

Kolhapur) was of pioneering nature. Michael Carrithers and Caroline Humphery in their book 'Assembly of Listeners: Jains in Society' (based on papers presented at the conference on 'Jains in society' held at Cambridge in June 1985) lists five criteria (namely: i. common culture, belief, practice and some interests; ii. significantly different from surrounding communities; iii. Be conscious of an identity; iv. Effective collectively in social, political and/or economic life; v. able to reproduce itself for considering Jains as a community in their position paper[9]. We shall discuss social consciousness in Jainism keeping these in mind. There are also a number of other studies by John Cort (*Jains in the world*), Paul Dundas (*The Jains*), James Laidlaw (*Riches and renunciation*), among others which explore specific segments of Jain communities in Jaipur, Patan and Ahmedabad.

1.2 Jainism

The word Jain is derived from the word jina (spiritual conqueror). Jina is a perfect human being who has attained a pure soul state associated with the four primary qualities namely infinite perception-knowledge-energy and bliss. He is an ordinary human being at the time of birth but through his strenuous spiritual purification efforts, he attains this state. Followers of the path shown by Jina are called Jains.

Reality: The definitive word for reality is 'sat' or existent. Each existent is with origination–decay and permanence simultaneously.[10] Thus reality is said to be persistence with change. Existents are characterised by dravya (substance) and the realms of substances are classified as jīva (living beings with consciousness) and non living beings (ajīva or without consciousness). There are infinite jīvas in this cosmos. Each jīva has the potential to attain Jina status through his strenuous spiritual purification efforts. However all living beings help (cooperate) with each other.[11] Further jīvas are broadly divided as pure soul (siddha) and empirical souls (defiled souls or saṅsārī jīva). Empirical souls go through innumerable varieties of existences grouped in four categories namely hell, heaven, human and sub-human. They are also classified as mobile (two to five senses) and immobile (one sensed only).

Cosmos[12] and its contents are neither created by any one nor can they be destroyed by anyone. They change form continuously,

according to Jainism's understanding of reality. Time periods, call *ārās*, are reckoned cyclically. Each *ara* or epoch has two parts namely period of rising happiness (*utsarpiṇī*) and period of decreasing happiness (*avasarpiṇī*). Each epoch has six *ārās*. Each *ārā* is associated with a series of twenty four ford makers (*tīrthaṅkaras*) who rejuvenate the religion so that the living beings can move forward to attain their worldly and spiritual objectives.

Religion is defined in a number of ways by different preceptors namely

- Nature of an entity is its religion;[13] that, which removes the worldly pains of the living beings and leads them to the state of bliss is religion.[14]
- Supreme forgiveness, modesty, straightforwardness, purity, truthfulness, self restraint, austerity, renunciation, non attachment and celibacy constitute religion.
- Non violence is the supreme spiritual virtue;[15] Conduct is religion.[16]

The cardinal principles of Jain way of life are:

- Non-violence thought (*ahiṅsā*)
- Non-possession (*Aparigraha*)
- Multiplicity of viewpoints (*Anekānta*)
- Responsibility for your actions and the results thereof (*karma doctrine*)
- Potential for Self realization

1.3 Social Consciousness in Jainism, a View

The general perception in the academic community is that Jainism is the religion of asceticism i.e. withdrawal from the world (renunciation or *nivṛtti*) to lead an ascetic life to attain liberation. This view is perhaps based on the great emphasis placed on code of conduct for the ascetics in Jain canons and scriptures prior to first century AD. Also the story literature (*purāṇas*) of Jains, which is very vast, has the distinctive feature of evolving the entire story around one person (hero) and traces his/her life in many births till he/she achieves the ultimate objective of becoming an ascetic and liberation thereafter. This may also develop a feeling of greater emphasis being put on renunciation rather than engagement in the world. In the *Śvetāmbara* Jain canons, only the seventh limb i.e.

Upāsakadaśānga gives life sketches of ten lay persons during Mahāvira's time.

However from the 2nd century AD, the Jain holy literature emphasizing the conduct for laity and known as *Śrāvakācāras* started getting written by Jain preceptors. They emphasized not only the ultimate liberation of the individual laity but also the rules of social conduct for them as they remain tied to the world. Perhaps Samantbhadra (2nd to 6th century AD)[17] a noted Jain preceptor and scholar from Southern India, was the first one to compose the text popularly known as Rattan Karanda Śravakācāra detailing the worldly and spiritual ethics of Jain laity.

Somdev Suri (Yaśastilakācampu in 943-960 AD), another important Jain scholar and preceptor, describes *dharma* for *śrāvakas* as of two basically different types namely *laukika* (worldly) and *pārlaukika* (other worldly or beyond the world). The *pārlaukika dharma* is the true path of liberation, or the Jain samaya as he calls it which every Jain indeed should know and follow. *Laukika dharma* on the other hand consists of social norms, customs, laws, rules, institutions in which Jains live amongst themselves and others provided they do not undermine or distort the performance of *pārlaukika dharma*.[18] We thus see the concept of *mulaguṇas* (basic virtues) six essential duties (*āvasyakas*), five *aṇuvratas* (with self imposed limits of observance by laity), three enhancing vows (*guṇavratas*) and four teaching vows (*śikṣāvratas*) coupled with eleven stages of spiritual development (pratimās) for laity leading him ultimately to ascetic life and liberation dovetailing *laukika dharma* with *pārlaukika*.

The *pārlaukika dharma* is called Mokṣamārga and consists of right belief-knowledge and conduct practiced together.[19] The essential and the first requirement of attaining liberation is right belief. It is of two types namely with attachment and without attachment. The first type is characterized by serenity (*praśama*), incessant fear of the miseries of transgression (*samvega*), compassion (*anukampā*) and existence of soul (*āstikya*) etc.

There are eight limbs of right belief.[20] So a right believer of Jain metaphysics will demonstrate the above characteristics in his personal and social interactions. The social characteristics are very important as they reflect how Jains interact with the society they live even though the doctrine suggests that one is responsible for his condition and emphasize self improvement.

The story of the two sons of first Jain *tīrthaṅkara Ādināth*, namely Bharat, the monarch and Bāhubali, the ascetic is an excellent example to show the practice and impact of both *laukika* (worldly) and *pārlaukika* (other worldly or beyond the world) dharmas. Bāhubali, the ascetic achieves liberation faster while Bharat, the emperor also achieves liberation but at a much later date while practicing his monarch-hood and keeping the *pārluakika dharma* always in his mind and actions.

All tīrthaṅkaras organized their followers in a fourfold congregation, namely ascetics (*śramaṇas*) male and female and laity (*śrāvakas*) male and female. The ascetics are required to follow *pārlaukika dharma* and guide the laity while the laity follows *laukika dharma* primarily but keep on progressing towards ascetic life ultimately. There is a difference between the *muni*'s path and the *śrāvaka*'s. The muni or *śramaṇa*'s path is the path of nivṛtti, of withdrawal from the world, of giving up. He is directly on the path of liberation. Yet there is a place for virtuous śrāvaka, even if his path is more circuitous. He follows the dharma of *pravṛtti*, or doing or action or engagement with the affairs of the world. This fits in well with the Jain notion of *aṇuvratas* which are the diluted versions of *mahāvratas* of the muni. His path, too, if he follows the Jain doctrine/*samaya* faithfully, would ultimately lead him to liberation.[21] This is also supported by the *Anekānta* doctrine of Jains which talks of looking at the reality from many view points and at least from the two viewpoints namely transcendental (eternal view or niścaya) and practical (present/practical or *vyavahāra*) views. The karma doctrine of Jains is also an important contributor to the Jain identity as it imposes on Jains the doctrine of work/effort to achieve their *laukika* and *pārlaukika* objectives rather than pray for some divine grace for everything and hold the destiny and divine grace as responsible for all their successes and failures.

From the discussions above, we can say that the Jain identity lays great emphasis on its path of spiritual purification based on the practice of non violence, non possessions etc is strongly concerned with lay identity. The social interactions of the laity are also derived from the same and emphasized for the laity also. The path to liberation is said to be right belief-knowledge-conduct practiced together till all *kārmika* bondages are annihilated from the defiled soul. This emphasis at times may lead to a separate

identity of being Jain and a feeling of being purer as their souls are less defiled by *kārmika* impurities over non-Jains.

Translated into practical implications we can say practice of *ahiṅsā* (like straining the water before use for drinking, not eating at night, putting a cover on mouth while speaking etc as primary Jain differentiators), *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness on the one hand and the feeling of donating/*dāna* or giving up and conservation or limiting consumption on the other) *anekānta* (existence of opposites, tolerance, co-existence etc) can be the core differentiators of Jain identity. As we have seen earlier the social consciousness can also be the collectivization of the consciousness of the individuals who make the society. Thus Jainism puts self improvement as the core value for its followers. There can be differences in different Jain communities (based on the religious practices influenced by the dominating religion of the region), economic and other engagements of the individuals as well as their own inclinations to pursue the Jain code of conduct. This leads to differences of practicing Jainism or leading their life as members of the immediate community/society they live in, say amongst Jains of different sects, of different regions of India and now overseas Jains, without undermining the *pārlaukika* dharma and keeping the same in mind to test the validity of their actions/behaviour.

It will be interesting to note that all Jain *tīrthaṅkaras*[22] were ordinary persons at birth (as against reincarnation of God in other religions); lived the life as ordinary persons even though born in rich families, with *tīrthaṅkara* karma created an impact on society they lived in before accepting renunciation and attaining omniscience and *tīrthaṅkara* status ultimately. Similarly the later preceptors also made significant efforts to bring in newer interpretations of Jain doctrine for laity to keep them focussed on their *pārlaukika dharma* while practising *laukika dharma* and be good social citizens. In this paper we shall study the first and the last (24th) tīrthaṅkaras, some preceptors of 2nd to 12th century and modern preceptors and religious leaders (laity) to see how they readjusted the social consciousness of Jains to meet the social needs of their times.

2. Ādināth/Ṛṣabha[23]

The end of third *ārā* of the *avasarpiṇī* period known as (Happy-Unhappy) was approaching resulting in decreasing potency of the

wish fulfilling tress (*kalpavrkṣa*) which provided all the necessities of human beings without their making any effort. The twins born to parents who lived as brother sister and became husband wife later on was also approaching an end. They started thinking and trying to live as tribes with occasional fights erupting between them and others. Further there were some signs of development of higher mental faculties amongst them, becoming inquisitive about the changes taking place. In the modern technological time we can roughly describe this as the stone-age. In philosophical terms we say the end of the period of enjoyment (*bhoga*) was approaching. People used to live carefree lives? They were grouped as *kulas* and the chief of the *kula* was called *kulakara*. There are fourteen famous *kulakaras* of whom Nābhi Raj was the ruling *kulkara* at that time.

Ṛṣabha was born to Nābhi and his wife Maru Devi. There was overall happiness and peace prevailing at the time of his birth. Ṛṣabha started displaying exemplary qualities since early childhood and became an object of adoration by all while growing to be a young boy/man. As he was born with superior qualities like clairvoyant knowledge, charming and strong body etc, Nābhi started directing the persons who came for problem resolution to Ṛṣabha. Ṛṣabha used to solve their problems fast and to their satisfaction. When Ṛṣabha became an adult, his father married him to two beautiful and virtuous girls named Sunandā and Sumangalā. Sumangalā (or Yaśaswati as per Ādipurāṇa and Digambar Jain's story literature) gave birth to Bharat (who became the first sovereign emperor) and ninety eight more sons plus one daughter Brāhmi while Sunandā gave birth to Bāhubali and daughter Sundari.

He is credited as the forerunner of modern day society, establishing work culture, form of governance, social systems but he ultimately renounced all his worldly belongings (giving them to his sons) to attain omniscience and become the first *tīrthaṅkara*. He established the four fold congregation while teaching his followers how to attain liberation. While designing the society, its norms and constituents, he had in his mind the welfare of all as the topmost concern. Being the first in all walks of life he is called as Ādināth also. Listed below are some of the innovative social reforms he is credited with.

2.1 Establishing a Societal System

He explained to all the people who came to him for guidance

that their physical endurances as well as of the wish fulfilling tress are decreasing. So they (the people) have to change their lifestyle and think of living in houses (rather than forests) collectively so that they can help each other and face the problems united. Concepts of family, co-existence, co-operation, tolerance, brotherhood/fraternity etc were extremely importance for survival. The first locality (which became his capital city also) established was called Vinita which later on became popular as Ayodhyā. He then made different groupings of such primary localities as villages and then their classification as towns/cities and grouping them as states (collection of towns) with separating and defending boundaries and chiefs of each grouping to administer them. Thus the role of a king, council of ministers, security systems, heads of villages/towns and cities were established for administration.

Work culture and division of the society into sub groups (castes): The days of enjoyment without work because of nature's bounty or divine grace are over. He said that from now onwards you have to work to get your food, shelter, protection etc. He asked the people to choose anyone of the six types of work namely asi, masi, kṛṣi, vidhyā, vāṇijya and śilpa[24] Thus the people opting for one of these six types of works were grouped as Kṣatriya, Brāhmaṇa, Vaiśya and Śudra varṇas (castes). The grouping as Brāhmaṇas is credited to his son Bharat, the first emperor /monarch. He also established the rules of work, of staying within their limits and not to cause problems to others.

Institution of family: To avoid conflicts concerning rights and duties, inheritance and sex related and other marriage issues, he established the concept of brother, sister, husband and wife, parents etc. He told that marriage between a boy and girl of the same parents cannot take place and thus bringing an end to the era of twins and assigning the right for living together and transfer of inheritance etc.

He established the penal code consisting of four classes namely: oral punishment i.e. reprimand in angry tone; detention in town for a specified time period, detention in a jail for a definite time and lastly to impart physical punishment like beating /making the offender physically hurt. He was thus called Prājapati and his coronation as the first king took place.

Education and Training of his Subjects

Ṛṣabha knew that the people have to be taught in order for the changes he introduced to be effective and hence established the importance of education and training. Accordingly he taught his eldest son Bharat seventy two arts, his second son Bāhubali martial arts and other similar arts, his eldest daughter Brāhmi eighteen alphabets and younger daughter Sundari, the mathematics. Both the daughters were also taught the arts of music, dance, adornment etc. Similarly he taught other arts and crafts to his other ninety eight sons. His children, then, started teaching their skills to others' thereby spreading the knowledge, skills etc to the common people. In this way he institutionalized the imparting of education and skills to the masses.

Through these education programmes, the people came to know of the use of fire to cook, to make pots, tools and implements for farming, defence etc, making cloth, skills of barbers, eating the food after its proper treatment of food (like cleaning, peeling the skins, cooking etc) to stay healthy.

Self Improvement and Realization

After implementing a social order and seeing his subjects happily settled as a society and enjoying prosperity, he realized that such prosperity will cause further problems of greed, discontent and associated pains. Being endowed with clairvoyant knowledge, he knew of his past lives and associated pains and pleasures of transmigration. He now started looking at his own self realization as the highest goal. He therefore renounced his kingship after anointing his eldest son Bharat as the king of the major part of his kingdom, Bāhubali as king of a different part of his kingdom and giving small pieces of land to his other ninety eight sons and distributing remaining wealth to all the people who came to him for seeking his blessings.

For himself, he gave up everything including his family, clothes and all worldly possessions. He even pulled all his hair to develop detachment from his own body (as a mark of a feeling to his soul, the real self and to his body as other). He accepted the vows of total non violence, self restraint and complete meditation on his self to realize its true nature. He left for the forests nearby in order to meditate on his self. He established a number of important

concepts during his ascetic life and prior to his becoming an omniscient, namely

- Worldly happiness is temporary and there is something beyond, known as eternal happiness/bliss to be achieved.
- Concept of *dāna*/charity. As an ascetic, he went without food for six months as no one knew how and what to offer him for food when he went out on his begging rounds until Śreyānsa of Hastināpur, due to his past life experiences, knew what to do. After observing proper rituals of inviting Ṛṣabha for food, he offered him sugarcane juice in his folded palms. This day is celebrated as Akṣayatrtyā and is the forerunner of the institution of charity.
- Essentiality of the concept of non possession: By giving up every worldly possession and not staying at one place so that he does not develop attachment to the place and its people.
- Practice of detachment, non violence, self restraint, austerities and meditation all through his ascetic life.

After attaining omniscience, he then started preaching the Mokṣamārga, setting up the four fold congregation so that others could also attain the liberation from the pains of transmigration and achieve bliss.

Thus he established the social system and its consciousness keeping the welfare of one and all in mind i.e. based on engagement with the worldly life for the laity and keeping in mind the ultimate objective of attaining bliss and freedom from transmigration of soul in various existences.

3. Mahāvira's Social Engineering[25]

The time period from the 1st to 23rd *tīrthaṅkaras* is considered to be a period when people were simple and followed the leader's commands. However with the approach of the end of the fourth ārā, the tendencies of the people increasingly became tainted with passions. So Mahāvira, the present pre-siding deity of Jains, who was born towards the end of the 4th ārā and attained liberation in 527BC (some 2,535 years ago), realized these social changes and initiated certain actions to rejuvenate the social and spiritual consciousness amongst his followers.

Before discussing Mahāvira, I will like to mention contribution of 22nd *tīrthaṅkara* Neminātha to promote non violence (refusing to

marry when he came to know of the animals being brought to be butchered and served to the marriage party) and the 23rd *tīrthaṅkara* Pārśvanātha who showed how to handle enemies (Kamatha stories) and also help animals attain heavenly existence (Padmāvati and Dharendra).

Even though Mahāvira hailed from a rich family, he gave up all his worldly wealth to activate divine knowledge associated with his soul and free himself from the cycle of birth-death-birth. Some of the examples of his actions/sermons with social overtones are discussed below.

3.1 Metaphysical

His definition of reality as endowed with permanence, origination and destruction i.e. persistence with change or being and becoming was remarkable in bringing various monist thinkers together with the aim of eliminating or minimizing the violence indulged in by followers of different faiths. He thus declared both materialistic and mental things as everlasting existents.

3.2 Socio-Ethical Method

He affected tremendous social change through the promulgation of the socio-ethical values of *ahiṅsā*, *Anekanta* and *Aparigraha*.

Ahiṅsā: In Ācāranga he says 'None of the living beings ought to be killed or deprived of life ought to be ruled or enslaved or possessed or put to unrest'. Further in Praśnavyākaran he designates social *ahiṅsā* as kindness, compassion, security, love, friendship, fearlessness and so on. Social *ahiṅsā* of Mahāvira begins with the awareness of the existence of others and their right to exist like one's own. He says that all living beings, like you, do not wish to have pain nor do they wish to die resulting in the current Jain slogan 'Live and let live'. *Paraspargraho jivānāma* or living beings cooperate with each other is another Jain slogan reflecting this doctrine of social *ahiṅsā* of Mahāvira.

Anekānta: Mahāvira realized that differences in opinions / viewpoints amongst different people emanate from their intellectual capabilities. These affect the social harmony more than economic or social inequalities. He thus said that differences in viewpoints emanate from the differences in the nature of things. This doctrine is based on existence of opposites (i.e. good and bad simultaneously) and the plurality of truth necessitating the futility

of rigidity in thoughts. These different aspects of things are to be understood as different aspects of the TRUTH giving rise to his doctrine of *Nayavāda* or *Anekānta*.

Aparigraha: Mahāvira knew that the root cause of all ills associated with economic inequalities is disproportionate possession of wealth by few individuals. Thus he gave religious cum social overtones to non possession and asked his householder disciples to limit their possessions and consumption (forerunner of today's conservation philosophy being in vogue in the West among other places) and share the rest (surplus) with others; while monks were asked to be free of any type of possessions (external or internal).

3.3 Uplift of Women/according them and the Downtrodden Freedom for Religious Pursuits

His acceptance of food from a slave and destitute woman (Candanā) and making her the head of the community of nuns in addition to creating a separate community of nuns to practice religious activities was revolutionary in giving women the right to study and freedom to practice religion which was till then denied to them. This act greatly enhanced the prestige of women in the society and diverted the oppressed widows from the ills like self burning (*sati prathā*) on husband's pyre or leading an oppressed life.

Similarly he declared that all living beings are equal rejecting the prevailing thinking of four fold societies into warriors, *brāhmanas,* traders and *śudras* by birth. He said one becomes great by his acts and not by birth. He opened his creed to all classes of not only human beings but all living beings. Samantabhadra rightly described his doctrine as *Sarvodaya* i.e. enlightenment of all.

3.4 Others

- Mahāvira propagated the doctrine of Karma to hold the individuals responsible for their acts and the results thereof rather than someone else up above.
- He used Prākrat language or the language of commoners and women, to deliver his sermons so as to make them accessible to the masses and not just a few learned scholars.
- He extended the four fold vows (i.e. *ahiṅsā, satya, acaurya* and *aparigraha*) to five fold i.e. bifurcate *aparigraha* into *aparigraha*

and *brhamcarya*. He realized the importance of stressing celibacy as the men and women were becoming more prone to sexual attractions and indulgences. These were detailed for adoption by laity in the later texts called Śrāvakācāra written by Jain preceptors.

- Making vegetarian and simple food in minimal quantities for sustenance as essential for spiritual and social uplift. Thus he rejected animal sacrifice or wanton killing of animals or destroying environment for physical pleasures or likes.

4. Jain Preceptors and Significant laity up-to 18th Centuries AD

Sixty four years after Mahāvira's nirvāna, existence of Jinas stopped. The era of preceptors/ācāryas started. They tried to retain the teachings of Mahāvira, document them and add new interpretations of social overtones so that the laity can practice them and perform their day to day worldly duties. Naturally, differences in the interpretations of the holy texts started showing differences by different ācāryas resulting in bifurcation of the creed and associated schisms.

In the tradition of the first *tīrthaṅkara* Adināth, emperor Candragupta (In the fourth century BC, first emperor of historical India and grandfather of Emperor Asoka) renounced his empire and accepted the Jain muni life under the guidance of Bhadrabāhu. Later he became an *ācārya* as Bhadrabāhu's successor also.

The period starting 2nd century AD marked the beginning of writing the code of conduct for the laity, known as *śrāvakācāras*. Samantabhadra was the pioneering ācārya who wrote Rattan Karanda Śrāvakācāra, the code of conduct for laity along with practical limitations and flaws of the vows prescribed for the laity (109 verses organized in four chapters) along with explaining the three jewels (right belief, right knowledge and right conduct for the laity). Somadevasuri wrote Upāsakādhyayana and Yaśastikā-campu defining *lukika* and *pārlaukika* dharmas of householders with a life story of Yaśasvi. Afterwards more than sixty such texts were written by different preceptors indicating minor changes here and there. Āśādhara wrote conduct for munis and laity. Thus the whole period saw interpretation and adoption of the Jain canons to maintain harmony with the dominating religion/s of the time but keeping the fundamental tenets of Jainism in mind.

Simultaneously a number of preceptors also started writing

story literature of various *tīrthaṅkaras*, 63 luminary persons to describe social interactions and adopting local non Jain customs in Jain religious and social rituals. Ādipurāna by Jinasena (818-867AD) is a sort of guide for all rituals for Jains not documented so far by adopting the Vedic rituals prevailing in South India at that time. Māntunga (Bhaktāmbara stotra) and other ācāryas started composing devotional poetry for tīrthaṅkaras and Jain pujās for use in the temple rights as devotion and bhakti were becoming the most popular forms of religiosity. Haribhadra tried to bring a reconciliatory approach amongst Jain concepts and Vedic explanations. He wrote a number of texts on Anekānta, different philosophies and their reconciliatory approaches etc. Other notable ācāryas who worked closely with the rulers /influential persons in not only ensuring continued practice of Jainism by their followers but also strengthening Jain identity are RatnaPrabh, four Dādāgurus and Hem Candra. On the other hand, lay persons Banarasi Dass and Todar Mull in Agra and Jaipur emphasized mysticism and condemned excessive temple rites.

During this period, there were a number of exemplary Jain laity who contributed through their conduct and use of their influence, their contributions to Jain art /literature and support to *ācāryas* to preserve and enhance the social consciousness of Jainism. Notable amongst them are Cāmunda Rāi (960AD), Bhāmāśāha (1568 A.D, Prime minister of Mahārānā Pratāp).

5. Twentieth Century and Onwards

In the late nineteenth century, Srimad Rajcandra, a *Śvetāmbaa* lay-man practiced Jain Mokṣamārga as a householder and became the spiritual teacher of Mahatma Gandhi. He emphasized strict practice of Jain code of conduct by laity. Gandhi practised the five minor vows of laity to achieve social objectives and led the country to freedom from the British Empire.

Towards the beginning of twentieth century we saw the emergence of Śānti Sāgar as the first Digambara monk after centuries. He started the institution of Digambar (sky cald) mendicant and today there are several hundred such monks. A number of these monks have started studying seriously and are contributing scholarly works while others have moved towards greater use of rituals, temple buildings and idol veneration to attract the laity in the creed and be popular.

Notable changes which took place in India are its independence, spread of science and technology, widespread movement of educated people (including Jains) to cities in India as well as to wealthy countries of the west. These changes brought the need for more and wider dispersal of canonical literature to educated Jains to retain Jain identity amongst the community elders) and check drifting away of Jains from its root values under the influence of western culture. New urban Jain communities started getting formed which were primarily temples centric or profession centric or at times caste centric. These were formed primarily due to displacement of people to exploit their economic potential and be seen in the world as a distinct community/identity.

Kānji Swāmi, a *Śvetāmbara* monk studied Kunda Kunda extensively and became a detached householder within a Digāmbar community emphasizing the mysticism of Kunda Kunda. Tulsi preached the doctrine of Anuvrata and gave the slogan 'If the individual person improves, the family will improve. If the family improves, the community will improve. If the community improves the city–state–country–world improves'. He thus emphasized main thrust of the self improvement of Jainism and the practical adoption of Anuvratas by laity. Mahā Prajna brought the scientific temperament into dialogue with the Jain canonical literature and made Prekṣā meditation a tool for treating physical ailments as his primary vehicle for self improvement and realization. Celanā (*ācārya nun*) started undertaking large social work projects. Jain research and education institutions started mush-rooming to write old canons and their commentaries and new explanations.

Jain householders started forming various social and trade organizations (Jain Milan, Jain Social groups, JAINA, JITO and other smaller trade and location oriented organizations like Young Jains of America and its branches like Young Jains of India, Jain doctors forum, Jain Professionals and so on). A number of weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines began being published. A number of sect oriented social organizations at national levels also started coming up to protect the interests of specific sect. Temple building and their rehabilitation, organizing group *pujās* under the auspices of a monk, became a major source of creating Jain identity. Some Jains started institutions to educate common people, provide medical services (hospitals and dispensaries), rehabilitate the disabled etc.

We thus see that the social conscious in Jainism is manifesting consciously in various forms but never leaving its focus of a mix of *laukika* and *pārlaukika dharma* based on its *Ahinsā, Aparigraha* and *Anekānta* doctrine. The Jain identity of being different is well recognized and getting increasingly visible. This is evident by using the word Jain before every social or professional or religious organization to bring together the cause of the profession/business and enhance the religious values simultaneously. Specific sociological studies are needed to go deeper in the subject to confirm the basic factors which contribute to the social consciousness emanating from Jainism and its individual followers and present the ongoing trend of new manifestations of social consciousness of Jains.

6.0 Conclusion

As discussed above, we can see how social consciousness evolves around the central theme of 'self realization (nature of self being knowledge and bliss) as enunciated by the tīrthaṅkaras and updated by Jain preceptors from time to time. Each individual is a part of a core group of beings, which may be defined as community which merges with regional and national bodies called societies. Here the importance is to be given to the constituents of community to include the entire eco system also and just human beings. Since individuals form the building blocks, we find small communities being very local and governed by their needs and guided by Jain doctrine but also getting influenced by different non Jain communities around them. At times these Jain communities may look very different from each other but when the question of integration comes, they unite together to give the society its consciousness and identity. We will therefore feel surprised to see a number of Jain communities either temple centric or some preceptor or monk/nun centric or some economic activity centric mushrooming even in a small Jain population in the country. More sociological and anthropological studies are needed to understand fully the subject under discussion.

REFERENCES

1. See "Social consciousness", accessed on Fev 1, 2010.
2. A society is a body of individuals that is outlined by the bounds of functional interdependence, comprising also possible characters or conditions such as national, cultural identity and solidarity etc.

Human societies are characterized by patterns of relationships between individuals that share a distinctive culture and institutions. Like other communities or groups, a society allows its individual members to achieve needs or wishes that they could not fulfill separately by themselves without the existence of solidarity. A society may be a particular ethnic group, such as the Saxons, a nation state like Bhutan, a broader cultural group, such as an Asian Society. The word society may also refer to an organized voluntary association of people for religious, benevolent, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic, or other purposes.

3. Community: Traditionally a "community" has been defined as a group of interacting people living in a common location. The word is often used to refer to a group that is organized around common values and social cohesion within a shared geographical location, generally in social units larger than a household. The word can also refer to the national community or global community with the advent of internet technology.
4. http://www.angelfirecom/md2/timewrap/consciousness.html
5. http://www.bopsecrets.org/cf/socialcponsciousness1.htm
6. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collective_Consciousness
7. Tattvārthasutra 'TS' by Umā Swāmi/Umā Swāti I.8, I.9
8. **Acquired:** A subject with an acquired social consciousness derives his or her viewpoint from the mainstream culture. This individual avoids identifying himself or herself with a marginalized culture. This individual generally is either not aware of or does not acknowledge the way that differences among people affect the way that they are treated within society. The individual is not fully active in society. The person with an acquired social consciousness does not question mainstream viewpoints, and acts accordingly, without confrontation. **Awakened:** A subject with an awakened social consciousness explores alternatives to the dominant cultural viewpoint this person might identify with a marginalized group, but the mainstream culture is central to his or her questioning or exploration. The subject recognizes and challenges social injustice. The person actively resists power and authority. The focus of discontent and action is often over the right to be visible, to have choice, or to be self determining. **Expanded:** A subject with an expanded social consciousness strongly identifies with their marginalized group. This person views status as a continuously changing social construct, thus viewing responses as a lifelong process. This individual has an understanding of the complexity of the social hierarchy, and acts carefully after weighing both sides

9. Five criterion are i. common culture, belief, practice and some interests; ii. Significantly different from surrounding communities; iii. Be conscious of an identity; iv. Effective collectively in social, political and /or economic life; v. able to reproduce itself.
10. Parasparopgraho jivānama TS V.21
11. 'The world is boundless and eternal, it exists from eternity and does not perish' I.4.6 Sutra Krtānga
12. Dhammo vatthu sahāvo khamadi bhavo ya —Kārtikeyanūprekṣā by Svāmi Kūmāra gāthā 478.
13. Deśayāmi samicinaṅ dharma karmanirvahaúam Rattana Karanda Sravakacara by Ssamantbhadra verse 2
14. Tattvartha Sutra by Uma Swati IX.6, also Kārtikeyanūprekṣā by Svāmi Kūmāra gāthā 478
15. Dasavaikalika 1, dhammo maṅgala mukkhittama——
16. Cārittaṅ khalu dhammo— Pravacanasāra by Kunda Kunda verse 8
17. Jainendra Siddhanta kosa by Jinendra Varni Vol IV page 326
18. *dvau hi dharamau grhasthānām,laukikah, pārlaikikaḥ Lokaśrayo bhavedadyah parah syadagamaśrayah,* (Upasakadhyaayana of Yaśastilakācampu, kalpa 34 verse 476, Mukund Lad Somadevsuri and the question of Jain identity).
19. samyagdarśanjnāncāritrānimoksamārgah TS 1.1
20. Limbs of right belief:
    - Relating to individual's improvement: State of doubtlessness *(Niśaṃkita);* State of no desire (except for creative or spiritual attainments) *Nikāṃkṣita;* freedom from superstitions *(Amūdhadṛṣṭi);* Develops virtuous dispositions *(Upagūhana).*
    - Relating to his social interactions: Not to hate a meritorious being (*Nirvicikitsā*); Develop positive condition of loving others (*Vātsalya*); To re-establish the fallen on the right path(*Sthitikaraṇa);* To propagate ethical-spiritual values *(Prabhāvanā*).
21. Assembly of Listeners by Michael Carrithers & Caroline Humphrey Page24; Yaśatilakācampu by Somdev suri as narrated by Mukund Lath Jain identity
22. *tīrthaṅkaras* (fordmakers. Ref Jainainendra Siddānta Koṣa Vol2, pages 371—A person who destroys all kārmika impurities (cause of transmigration) himself and leads others to attain the same status is known as tīrthaṅkara. Every time cycle has twenty four tīrthaṅkaras. Generally they are born as human beings to become tīrthaṅkara from their previous life as heavenly being of superior status. From birth they are possessed of clairvoyance knowledge and show extraordinary characteristics in their life prior to

renunciation and then after attaining the trio of omniscience, flawless (absence of all types of flaws like hunger, thirst, pains of any kind etc) and delivering sermon of spiritual beneficence to others. They show exemplary capabilities to resolve social problems in their life prior to renunciation and then until they attain omniscience. After omniscience they show the path of liberation only. Time wise, the fourth ārā, i.e. beginning of the period of effort (karmayuga) and end of era of enjoyment (bhoga yuga) is the period during which the twenty four tīrthaṅkaras are born. In the present time cycle Lord Ādināth is the first tīrthaṅkaras and Lord Mahāvira is the 24th tīrthaṅkaras.

23. References are drawn from Ādipurāna vol 1 (chapters 16 to 21st) by Ac Jina Sena published by Bhartiya Jnanaptha with Hindi translation by PannaLal Sastri; Jain Saga (English translation of Triśaṣtilaka Puruṣa cāritra by Ac Hem Candrasuriswarji by Ms Helen Johnson and edited by Muni Samvegashvijay)) and Jain Dharma kā Maulika Itihāsa by Ac. Hastimal ji published by Samyakjnana Pracaraka Mandal Jaipur.
24. asi means to serve with arms i.e. defence/police forces; masi is to serve by writing and maintaining accounts; kṛṣi is to till the land and grow food; vidhyā is acquire textual knowledge and impart that to others; vāṇijya is trade /commerce and śilpa is use of physical capabilities like serving others, arts and crafts etc. (Ādi Purāṇa 16/363)
25. Methods of Mahāvira for Social transformation by K.C. Sogani as published in study Notes of ISJS & Involvement of Jainism in social works by Shugan C Jain.

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2

Methods Used by Mahāvīra for Social Change

Kamal Chand Sogani

In the cultural history of mankind, Mahāvīra is one of those few towering personalities who fought for individual liberty and revolted against the economic exploitation and social oppression of man and introduced vigorous innovations in the then existing social law and order. Mahāvīra regarded the individual and his social responsibility as the key to the progress of both individual and society. Mahāvīra did not confine himself to individual upliftment, but he dedicated himself to the development of a new creative social order for the healthiest orientation of the individual. Thus in the philosophy of Mahāvīra, both individual and society, 'I' and 'Thou' are properly reconciled.

Mahavir propounded the following sets of methods conducive to new creative social order for bringing about social change in *Samyaka* (right) direction and giving rise to a new social order.

1. Metaphysical Method

For the reflective person Mahāvīra propounded that our conduct and behaviour are conditioned by our metaphysical speculation. The incentive to social change emerges from a deep and sound metaphysical theory which requires proper application of logic to experience. Samantabhadra (2nd A.D.), an ardent follower of Mahāvīra, argues that the conceptions of bondage and liberation, *Puṇya* and *Pāpa*, heaven and hell, pleasure and pain and the like lose all their relevance and significance, if we exclusively recognize either permanence or momentariness as constitutiing the nature of substance.[1] Mahāvīra differs from all absolutists in their approach to the unfoldment of the inner nature of reality. He weaves the fabric and structure of reality on the authority of indubitable

experience and is not swayed in the least by the fascinations of a priori logic. Owing to this deeprooted abhorrence of the abstract way of philosophising, Mahāvīra evaluates what is given in experience, and consequently advocates change to be as much ontologically real as permanence. It may be said that "if the Upaniṣadic thinkers found the immutable reality behind the world of phenomena and plurality, and the Buddha denounced everything as fleeting and sorrowful and pointed to the futility of all speculation, Mahāvīra adhered to the common experience, found no contradiction between permanence and change, and was free from all absolutism."[2]

In consonance with the perspective adopted by Mahāvīra in the metaphysical speculation, substance is that which is characterized by simultaneous origination, destruction and persistence.[3] To illustrate, gold as a substance exists with its modifications and qualities. Now after making an ornament, gold as a substance is existent along with its attributes and what changes is the mode.

Thus nature of substance may now oblige us to think that things both material and mental are everlastingly existent. Such a view of things cannot even pretend to conceive without falling into inconsistency the intervention of any eternal and self-subsistent maker, either personal or impersonal, for bringing into existence the diverse things of the world.

It may be noted here that origination and destruction are applicable to *Paryāyas* (Modifications) and persistence to qualities along with substance. Hence permanence is not the denial of change, but includes it as its necessary aspect. The notion of *Paryāyas* is the contribution of Mahāvīra to metaphysical thinking.

2. Socio-Ethical Method

Effective social changes were made by Mahāvīra through the promulgation of the socio-ethical values of *Ahiṁsā, Aparigraha* and *Anekānta* these three are the consequences of Mahāvīra's devotedness to the cause of social reconstruction.

(a) Ahiṁsā

In an unprecedented way Mahāvīra clarified Ahiṁsā. In the Acārānga he saya, "none of the living beings ought to be killed or deprived of life, ought to be ordered or ruled, ought to be enslaved

or possessed, ought to be distressed or afflicted and ought to be put to unrest or disquiet.[4]

त्तव्वा, ण परितावेयव्वा, ण उद्दवेयव्वा

The sociopolitical organisations and the capitalistic set up can easily derive inspiration from this ethico-social statement. Thus the Āyāro (Ācārāṅga) conclusively pronounces that after understanding the importance of kindness to beings, the enlightened person should preach, disseminate and applaud it at all places in East-West and North-South directions[5] The Praśnavyākaraṇa Sūtra designates Social Ahiṁsā as kindness, security, salutariness, fearlessness, non-killer, and so on.[6]

The *Ācārāṅga* gives us certain arguments to renounce *Hiṁsā*.

(1) Socio-political argument against *Hiṁsā*: The *Ācārāṅga* condemns *Hiṁsā* by saying that its operation is without any stop, cessation and discontinuance and it goes on incrasing to the extent posible with the political consequence that the race of armaments becomes unarrestable and continues to grow without any check. In contradistinction to this it eulogizes *Ahiṁsā* by saying that its observance is total and not piecemeal, with the result that the armament race discontinues and comes with the result that the armament race discontinues and comes to a stop.[7]

(2) Psychological Argument against *Hiṁsā* : After comprehencing and beholding the significance of peacefulness of beings, one should renounce *Hiṁsā*,inasmuch as *Hiṁsā* causes suffering to beings and human suffering caused by theft, hoarding, falsehood, slavery, economic exploitation, social operation, curtailment of legitimate freedoms and the like is a great mental disturbance is dreadful and is associated with unbearable pain and affliction. Since life is dear to all beings, pleasures are desirable, pain is undesirable for them, beings ought not to be killed, ruled, possessed, distressed and so on.[8]

The criterion of perverted action is *Hiṁsā*, whereas the criterion of right action or ethico-social action is Ahiṁsā. It is of capital importance to note that when our energies are directed to *Hiṁsāka* (destructive) ends social development is obstructed and when our energies are directed to *Ahiṁsaka* (constructive) ends social development sets in.

It will not be possible to talk of Ahiṁsā without a world of

living beings. Social Ahiṁsā begins with the awareness of the 'other'. Like one's own existence, it recognises the existence of other beings. There exits the universo of beings in general and that of human beings. There exists the universe of beings in general and that of human beings in particular.

The number of Prāṇas possessed by the one-sensed to five-sensed souls is four, six, seven, eight, nine and ten respectively. This classification of Jīvas into five kinds is sused for the measurement of the degree of Ahiṁsā. The more the senses the more the evolved conciousness. As for example, two-sensed beings are more evolved tan the one-sensed beings, five sensed beings are more evolved than the one, two, three and four-sensed beings. Thus Ahiṁsā will be directly proportionate to the Ahiṁsā of the beings (Jīvas) classified.

It may be asked what is in us on account of which we consciously lead a life of values based on *Ahiṁsā*? The answer is : it is Karuṇā which makes one move in the direction of adopting *Ahiṁsā*-values. It may be noted that the degree of *Karuṇā* in a person is directly proportionate to the development of sensibility in him. The greatness of a person lies in the expression of sensibility beyond ordinary limits. This should be borne in mind that the emotional life of a person plays a decisive role in the development of healthy personality and *Karuṇā* is at the core of healthy personality and *Karuṇā* is at the core of healthy emotions. Attachment and aversion bind human personality to mundane,-existence, but *Karuṇā* liberates the individual from Karmic enslavement. The *Dhavalā,* the celebrated commentary on the Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama, remarkably pronounces that *Karuṇā* is the nature Of soul.[9] To make it clear, just as infinite knowledge is the nature of soul, so also is *Karuṇā.* This implies that *Karuṇā* is potentially present in every being although its full manifestation takes place in the *Arhat.*

The perfect being. Infinite *Karuṇā* goes with infinite knowledge. Finite *Karuṇā* goes with finite knowledge.

It is significant to point out that Mahavira's social mind exhorted that *Ahiṁsā* Consists in recognising the dignity of man irrespective of caste, color and creed. Man is man and should be recognised as such without any hesitation. The dignity of man is sacred and it is our duty to honour this dignity. Every individual, whether man or woman, should enjoy religious freedom without

any distinction. As non-violent society can not subscribe to class exploitation and social oppression of man. Mahavira bestowed social prestige upon the down-trodden individuals. This led to the development of self-respect in them. Thus he showed that no man or woman should be deprived of availing himself of the opportunities of advancement. This Ahimsite spirit of Mahavira extended itself even to the lowest scale of life and he promulgated that life as such is basically indentical. Hence no living being should be hurt, enslaved and excited.

(b) Aparigrha

Mahāvīra was will aware of the fact that economic inequality and the hoarding of essential commodities very much disturb social life and living. These acts lead to the exploitation and enslavement of man. Owing to this, life in society is endangered. Consequenty, Mahāvīra pronounced that the remedy for the ill of economic inequality is Aparigraha. All the means of illegitimate *Parigraha* bring about social hatred, bitterness, and exploitation. The method of *Aparigraha* tells us that one should keep with oneself that which is necessary for one's living and the rest should be returned to society for its well-being.

(c) Anekānta

It should be borne in mind that along with human and economic inequality, differences in Outlook create a situation of conflicto in society. The result is that constructive tendencies in man suffer a great deal. If we take things in the right perspective we shall find that differences in Outlook appear as a result of the use of creative faculties inherent in man. If this fact is not adhered to, these differences become the cause of conflicto between man and man, the consequence of which is that social unity is disrupted. Mahāvīra by his deep insight could see the waste of social energy on account of the wrong understanding of the nature of things. Consequently, he preached that differences in Outlook are in fact differences in the nature of things. These different aspects of things are to be understood as the different aspects of truth. In fact, difference in Outlook should be treated as difference in standpoints. By this, dissension disappears and social solidarity sets in. Mahāvīra's doctrine of standpoints can be called *Nayavāda* which is a corollary of *Anekāntavāda,* the doctrine of multiple aspects of truth. By virtue

of the promulgation of this social value, man started thinking that along with his own standpoint, the standpoint of the other is also significant. This gave rise to social tolerance and broad-mindedness, which is a key to social adjustment and progress. This led to the conclusion that truth cannot be monopolised and every man in society, can subscribe to the discovery of a new aspect of truth. Thus *Anekānta* is the dynamic principle of social life, by virtue of which life is saved from being stagnant.

3. Method of According Religious Freedom to Women and Down-Trodden People

Mahāvīra gave complete religious freedom to women. They were allowed to accept the life of asceticism like men. Mahāvīra gave complete religious freedom to women. They were allowed to accept the life of asceticism like men. Mahāvīra himself initiated Candanā into the ascetic order. In the Saṃgha of Mahāvīra 36000 Sadhvīs were following religious observances. "The followers of Jaina religion have been divided into four categories, viz., Sadhus, Sadhvīs, Śravakas and Śravikās. Sadhvīs are female ascetics who follow the five great vows in a very strict manner. This shows that complete freedom was given to women to enter the ascetic order. Female sex was no bar to the practice of asceticism. The Jaina Ācāryas were extremely sympathetic in their attitude to women and admitted them freely into their order, no matter whether the candidates for admission were royal consorts, members of the aristocracy, and women belonging to the common run of society.[10]

Mahāvīra based the fourfold division of society on activities and not on birth. Good conduct and not caste is the object of reverence. Merit is the basis of caste and the pride of caste destroys right living.

4. Method of Propounding the Philosophy of Fighting Defensive Wars and Philosophy of Vegetarianism

The term *Hiṁsā* may be defined as the committing of injury to the *Dravya-Prāṇas* and the *Bhāva-Prāṇas* through the operation of intense-passion-infected Yoga (activity of mind, body, and speech).[11] Suicide, homicide and killing of any other life whatsoever aptly sum up the nature of Hiṁsā, inasmuch as these villainous actions are rendered conceivable only when the Dravya- Prāṇas and the Bhāva-Prāṇas pertaining to oneself and to others are

injured. The minimum number of Dravya-Prāṇas has been considered to be four and the maximum has been known to be ten; and the Bhāva-Prāṇas are the very attributes of Jīva. The amount of injury will thus be commensurate with the number of Prāṇas injured at a particular time and occasion.

Hiṁsā is of two kinds, namely, intentional and non-intentional.[12] The intentional perpetrator of Hiṁsā engages himself in the commitment of the acts of Hiṁsā by his own mind, speech and action; provoques others to commit them; and endorses such acts of others. Besides, Hiṁsā which is unaviodably committed by defending oneself from one's foes is denominated as non-intentional defensive Hiṁsā. This leads us to the philosophy of fighting defensive wars.[13]

Now the householder is incapable of turning away completely from Hiṁsā; hence he should keep himself away from the delibèrate commission of Hiṁsā of the two-sensed to five-sensed beings.[14] The commitment of Hiṁsā in adopting defensive contrivances, can not be counteracted by him. Thus he has to commit intentional injury to one-sensed Jīvas, namely, the vegetable-bodied, the fire-bodies etc; and non-intentional injury in fighting defensive wars. Even in the realm of one-sensed Jīvas and in the realm of fighting defensive wars he is required to confine his operations in such a way as may affect the life and existence of a very limited number of Jīvas.[15] In these two provinces the point to be noted is that of alleviating the amount of injury that is apt to be caused and not that of total relinquishment which is not possible without jeopardizing the survival of man. The hard fact to be noted is that man is subject to Hiṁsā by the very condition of his existence. Yet instead of aggravating the natural weight of Hiṁsā by falling foul upon one another and by our cruel treatment of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, we should endeavour to alleviate this general curse, to the extent to which we are capable of doing, by conforming ourselves to the sacred injunctions enjoined by Jaina spiritual teachers. Vegetarianism is therefore prescribed. It limits us to the unavoidable injury caused to only one-sensed- Jīvas. This is the philosophy of vegetarianism propounded by Jainism.

5. Method of Propagating the Doctrine of Karma

Mahāvīra ascribed responsibility to an individual for the actions that he does in society. For establishing this he propagated the

doctrine of Karma. Individuals differ from one another in respect of cognition, conation and affection etc. What is the cause of this difference? The answer of Mahāvīra is that it is the beginningless material subtle principle known as Karma that is responsable for the cause of differences in individuals. This Karma has been exercising its limiting and crippling influence on individuals from the beginningless past. This material subtle principle is known as Dravya-Karma, and its psychical counterpart in terms of Rāga (Attachment) and Dveṣa (Aversion) is called Bhāva-Karma.

It is no doubt true that Karmas bind the self to mundane existence. Now the question that arises is this: How the self is bound by Karmas? What are the causes that create Karmic bondage in individuals. The answer of Mahāvīra is that it is action (mental, bodily and vocal) polluted by passion that cause empirical bondage to individuals.[16] The passion-free actions do not bring about any mundane bondage whatsoever. When there are no passions, there is no bondage (Bandha). It is passion that mar the socio-spiritual career of an individual.

6. Method of Emphasizing Individual Liberty alongwith Social Responsibility

Mahāvīra fought for individual liberty in the context of social life. Mahāvīra regarded individual and his social responsibility as the key to the progress of both the individual and society. Mahāvīra was neither merely individualistic nor merely socialistic. In his attitude both individual and society are properly reconciled. If individual liberty is to be sought, social responsibilities can not be dispensed with.

The history of social thought reveals that with the advancement of knowledge social beliefs of a particular age are replaced by new beliefs. Many religious superstitions, social paths of life and other forms of follies and falsities are derogatory to individual progress. The individual who is a slave to customary beliefs, however false they have delared to be, cannot develo phis own personality and his actions are just like machines. Mahāvīra, therefore, preaches that an individual should be free from follies (Amūḍhatās).[17] It is only through such individuals that society progresses and a scientific outlook gains ground. Such individuals are forward looking, and are free from the pressures of narrow traditionalism. They are always open-minded and are ever eager to learn from history and experience.

In order that an individual becomes an embodiment of noble thought and actions, virtuous dispositions are, to be cultivated. This prepares the individual to do certain kinds of actions in certain kinds of situations. This is not just to think or feel in certain ways. There may be individuals who can think clearly and express good emotions whenever the situation calls for, but they may not act virtuously when required to do so. Consequently, Mahavira preached that an individual should develop virtuous dispositions of honesty, gratitude, *Ahiṁsā*, forgiveness, modesty, straight forwardness etc. This is known as upvrhana.[18] It cannot be gainsaid that noble thoughts can be translated can be translated into action through the medium of chracter. Mere thought is important to bring about any individual transformation. It is only virtues in addition to thought that can effect transformation in the life of an individual and transmute existing state of affairs.

Mahāvīra, no doubt, greatly emphasised the development of the individuals, inasmuch as he was convinced of the fact, that there is nothing over and above the good of the individual men, women and children who compose the world. But he did not lose sight of the fact that the individual develops not in isolation but among other individuals. Thus every individual, therefore, shall have certain responsibilities towards one another. This is the same as saying that an individual has certain social responsibilities. Therefore, social and individual morality are equally necessary to a good world.

There should not be any distinction between man and man on the basis of religiÛn, race, nationality. To create differences between one individual and the other on these factors is derogatory, and therefore, should be condemned ruthlessly. Consequently, Mahāvīra exhorted us not to hate individual on these accounts (*Nirvicikitsā*).[19] These are irrelevant inequalities.

These negative conditions of not hating others is not sufficient, but the positive condition of loving them (*vātsalya*) is very much necessary.[20] To love is to see that equal opportunities of education, earning and the like are received by every individual without any distinction, of race, religion, sex and nationality. In his own times Mahāvīra fought for the equality of all men, and he revered individual dignity. Where there is love there is no exploitation. To treat other individuals as mere means is decried and denied. Where

there is *vātsalya,* all our dealings with others will be inspired by reverence; the role of force and domination will be minimised.

It is likely that individuals may deviate from the path of righteousness. To establish them in the good life is *'Sthitikaraṇa'*.[21] This is very much necessary in a society where the rule of creative impulses is to be established.

Lastly, the good ways of life, of thinking and doing things should be made widely known to people at large, so that they may feel obliged to mould their lives in that pattern. Mahāvīra, therefore, says to propagate value of life (Prabhavana).[22]

7. Method of Using Common man's Language

It will not be out of place to mention that Mahāvīra was desirous of making the values of life accesible to the masses of the people, so he adopted Prākṛta for the propagation of ethico-spiritual ways of life and living. Now it is intelligible that Mahāvīra's Sojourn in the Arhat state of life inspired him to preach in the universal language used by the masses of people, though Vedic language and the classical Saṣskḥta preceded him. This may be styled language renascence which supported the upliftment of the masses. The neglect of the common man ended with this attitude of Mahāvīra.

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3

Significance of Dialogue for Social Transformation: Jaina Perspective

Priyadarshana Jain

Mankind today faces the challenge of living in harmony in multi religious society, besides confronting the challenges of global warming, climate change, terrorism, environmental degradation, species extinction and degeneration of moral and social values. In the context of growing fundamentalism and communalism, it is imperative that man works towards religious harmony and for this it is important that each religion focuses on its spiritual heritage and common ethical foundations and above all the socio-cultural and spiritual values that bind man to man, man to nature and man to God. The religious history of India records that religion has been a catalyst of social transformation and most of the social reformers had their roots in religion and philosophy be it the *Vedic rishis* or *Shramanic* saints and seers. We see that the various social reform movements right from the time of Mahavira who voiced against the Vedic sacrifices to the very recent changes brought through human rights, animal rights, environmental protection, have brought about tremendous social changes be it in the form of emergence of new spirituality, attitude shifts or life-style patterns. Very recently, Inter-faith dialogue and religious pluralism seem to reveal the dynamic nature of the various religious traditions in India and abroad and reveal that through dialogue the self and society can be transformed.

What is Dialogue?

Dialogue is a discussion intended to explore a subject or to resolve a problem. Dialogue in Jainism explores the deeper questions of human existence and the nature of reality. Dialogue is indeed the need of the hour. Man needs to engage in dialogue in

order to tap his latent potential and to resolve the conflicts at various levels. Science, nature, humanity, technology, materialism, spirituality, violence, non-violence, war and peace are some of the aspects that need to be thoroughly analyzed from different perspectives. Hence man needs to engage in Dialogue for social transformation and cosmic integration. If his perspective is one sided and blurred then the society at large suffers. As it is said, 'Man is pre-eminently a mind-making, self-mastering, and self-designing animal; and the primary locus of all his activities lies first in his own organism, and in the social organization through which it finds fuller expression. Until man had made something of himself he could make little of the world around him[1] . The complex laws that regulate the universe at the micro and macro level and that of evolution of the intellect and consciousness need to be understood and respected and for this besides social reformers and philosophers there have been scores of mystics, poets and saints who have engaged in Dialogue with the common man and thus propelled social transformation for total transformation.

Need for Dialogue in Modern Times

Today there is crisis at all levels be it energy crisis, raw material crisis, population crisis, species extinction crisis, ecological crises, food and portable water crisis, pollution crisis, and above all there is psychological and spiritual crisis, which is at the root of all crisis. A feeling of oneness and inter-relatedness irrespective of the differences, celebration of pluralism amidst the fundamental underlying unity of the cosmos need to be realized, nurtured and shared in the larger interest of society and mankind. A new kind of spirituality which respects the sacredness of all life-forms and the integrity of all the components of nature is fast emerging through Dialogue and active social participation and this shall indeed lay the foundation of not only social transformation but of total transformation from materialism to spirituality, from disease to holistic health and well being, from violence to non-violence, from information to knowledge, from knowledge to wisdom, from fear to security, from terrorism to kindness and above all from exploitation to preservation and conservation of nature.

Purpose of Dialogue in Jainism

The purpose of Dialogue in Jainism is enlightenment and

emancipation which is the birthright of not only humans but of all life forms. Jainism is not just a setofbeliefs or dogma but it is a way of life that promotes spiritual well being of not only one individual, community or nation but of all life that is inter-dependent and inter-connected. It is not anthropocentric but bio-centric and the well being of all is its primary concern. The spirit of a disciplined regulated life of self-restraint which springs from the realization of oneness of all living beings is the spirit that resonates through the great vows or *Mahavratas* and the primary vows or *Anuvratas*. The self-regulatory vows and the need for a life of self-restraint at all levels are taught to the common man through Dialogue and discourses by thousands of Jain saints who walk bare foot leading utmost eco-friendly life styles not preaching but practicing the art of right living and experiencing holistic health and well being. They are the spiritual counselors who heal humanity through Dialogue, thus transforming them from common individuals to awakened spiritual personalities (*sadhakas*) or accomplishers.

They are the torch bearers and messengers of *'Jinavani Mata'* and seek nothing but *Jinahood* for themselves and for all mankind and all beings. The purpose of Dialogue in Jainism is to facilitate a fuller human being who is blemish-less, divine, awakened and compassionate. The purpose of dialogue in Jainism is to enable man to conquer his animal instincts, to remain humane and to strive to tap the hidden divine potential. In other words, dialogue aims at conquering the *bahiratman* i.e., the material self, listening to the *antaratman* i.e., the inner self in order to realize the *paramatman* i.e., the divine self latent within.

The *Acharanga Sutra* reveals that most of the living beings do not know from where things have come? They are unaware of their true self and the cause of their suffering.[2] It further reveals that firstly either by *Jatismarana Jnana* i.e., knowledge of the past lives, secondly by listening to the sermons of the Tirthankaras or omniscients and thirdly by listening to and having a dialogue with self-realized souls one can know about their essence.[3] Through *'Jna'* consciousness one knows the reality and through *'Pratyakhyana'* consciousness one gives up all sinful and harmful activities.[4] Through listening to reality and through Dialogue the soul who realizes its true nature is a believer, is an *atmavadi*. An *atmavadi* alone will believe in rebirth and transmigration and he is

said to be a *lokavadi* i.e., believer in rebirth. Such a soul will realize that it is due to its own karmas that it transmigrates in the world and he is said to be a *karmavadi*. The cause of karmic bondage is one's own actions of thought, word and speech and one who realizes this is a *kriyavadi*. He realizes that he is responsible for all his actions and reactions.[5] Thus through listening and through Dialogue the ignorant soul is transformed to a self-realized soul and such a soul alone can lead the society in the right direction of over-all development and universal well-being.

In the absence of the above, neither the soul is awakened nor is the society transformed in the real sense. On the other hand, the individuals in particular and not only the society but the environment too has to bear the burden of the atrocities of the irrational activities of man which spring from ignorance, violence and insensitivity.

The *Dasavaikalika Sutra* reveals,

"Soccha janai kallanam, Soccha janai pavagam
Ubhayam pi janai soccha, Jam chheyam tam samayare [6]

i.e., by listening one knows the path of welfare and by listening one knows the path of sin, both are known by listening, later an aspirant treads on the one which is best.

Thus the dialogue is carried on between the teacher and the disciple, the wise and the ignorant, the spiritual visionary and the social activist and thus practical in-depth knowledge is shared to address growing human problems and situations, ethical–social values, and material aspirations. By Dialogue we can experience the presence of the supreme Godhood within us and amidst us. Dialogue is a strong tool for social integration and it is for building peaceful social relationship by the people, for the people and with the people.[7] The potential of participatory dialogue is a means of social integration and for building a peaceful society.

Benefits of Dialogue

- Spiritual discourse and dialogue promotes a strong social fabric that accommodates diversity by recognizing the underlying spiritual unity.
- Various members and groups of a society come together to meet the global ecological challenges through Dialogue.
- Dialogue promotes a culture of peace and brotherhood.

- Through dialogue social justice can be achieved effortlessly.
- Dialogue enhances the skill of communication at a deeper, broader and larger level.
- Dialogue promotes common ideals and values for working together and for building a common humanity, transforming life and the environment. It creates a consciousness about human rights, social justice and human liberation.[8]
- Dialogue promotes social policies which uphold peace, human rights, democratic values and tolerance coupled with compassion.
- It enables people to live in harmony, to love selflessly and to help others to live, thus upholding the values of non-violence, non-absolutism and non-attachment.

A few References of Dialogue in Jainism

In Jainism the purpose of Dialogue is spiritual awakening, enlightenment and liberation. Lord Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankar had a Dialogue with the eleven *Ganadharas* who were erudite Brahmin pundits of their time, although each one had a doubt or the other based on the Vedic studies. But after they met Lord Mahavira all their doubts were clarified and they became spiritually awakened. The names of the *Ganadharas* and their doubts are as follows:

1. Indrabhuti - His doubt was regarding the existence of soul.
2. Agnibhuti - His doubt was regarding karmas.
3. Vayubhuti – His doubt was whether the body itself is the *jiva* or whether it is different from *jiva*.
4. Vyakta - His doubt was whether the five elements were real or unreal like a dream.
5. Sudharma – His doubt was whether the *jiva* will be of the sane kind or of a different kind in the next birth.
6. Mandit - His doubt was regarding bondage.
7. Mauryaputra – His doubt was regarding the existence of Heaven.
8. Akampit – His doubt was whether hell was real.
9. Achalbhrata – His doubt was regarding the existence of good and bad karma.

10. Metary – His doubt was regarding the existence of next birth.
11. Prabhas – His doubt was regarding *Moksha*.[9]

The 23rd chapter of the *Uttaradhyayana Sutra* records the Dialogue that took place between Keshi Kumar, the last disciple of 23rd *Tirthankara* Parshavanatha and Gautam Ganadhara the first disciple of the 24th *Tirthankara* Lord Mahavira. When Keshi asked Gautam as to which *Dharma* was right, the *Chaturmaya Dharma* (of four *Mahavratas*) or the *Dharma* of Mahavira which stressed on five *Mahavratas*, besides a set of other questions relating to the differences in the practices of the disciples of the 24th *Tirthankara*, Gautam replied: *'Panna Samikkhaya Dhammam'* [10]

i.e., one should rationalize, understand dharma and then follow it (and not blindly follow it).

The ten chapters of the *Dashavaikalika Sutra* reveal that for social and total transformation an aspirant should practice dharma in the following way. An aspirant ought to be:

- *Kartavya sheel* - dutiful
- *Dhairya sheel* - forbearing
- *Aachar sheel* - righteous
- *Samvedansheel* - sensitive to the suffering of all living beings
- *Bhiksha sheel* - contented with what one gets
- *Sanyam sheel* - self-restrained
- *Vivek sheel* - wise and endowed with the power of discriminating the good from the bad, the right from the wrong.
- *Ekagra sheel* - having the power of concentration.
- *Vinaya sheel* - humble and modest.
- *Adarsh sheel* - having lofty ideals to be virtuous and pious.[11]

The Jaina scriptures and commentaries are full of references of the Dialogues that took place between the *Tirthankaras*, self-realized saints and seers and the ardent followers besides other practitioners like Makkhali Goshala, Ajit keshikambal, Sakdalputra and others. The *Bhagavati Sutra* records the 36,000 questions and Dialogues that took place between Lord Mahavira and Gautam *Ganadhara*.

A Sample of a Dialogue Compiled from Jaina Agamas

Disciple: O Lord! Will I realize *Moksha*?

Master: Yes, O *Devanupriya*! It is possible for you to realize *Moksha*.

Disciple: How is it possible, O Lord!

Master: Just as there is oil in the sesame seed, butter in the curds, fire in the wood, juice in the sugarcane, fragrance in the flower, gold in the mines, likewise the eternal bliss of *Moksha* is latent in each soul. Just as a skilled laborer separates the oil from the sesame seed, butter from the curds, fire from the wood, juice from the sugarcane, fragrance from the flower, gold from the mines; likewise a spiritual aspirant by rational knowledge-vision-conduct detaches the soul from all the foreign karmic particles and realizes *Moksha* or eternal bliss.

Disciple: O Lord! It is possible for all living beings to realize Moksha?

Master: *'No atthe samatthe'* i.e., no this is not possible. There are two kinds of *jivas* viz mobile (*trasa*) and immobile (*sthavara*). Of these only the mobile being can realize *Moksha* and not those in immobile bodies like plants, etc. (The immobile need to advance further on the ladder of liberation to be liberated)

Disciple: Will all the mobile beings realize *Moksha*?

Master: No, there are two kinds of mobile beings viz humans and non-humans i.e., animals, beasts etc. Of these only humans will realize *Moksha*.

Disciple: Will all humans realize *Moksha*?

Master: No, there are two types of humans viz. – with reason (*sanni*) and i.e., without reason (*asanni*) and also developed (*paryapta*) and undeveloped (*aparyata*) of these the beings with reason (*sanni*) those that are developed (*paryapta*) alone can realize Moksha.

Disciple: O Lord! Will all humans with reason and those that are developed realize *Moksha*?

Master: No! Not at all the developed humans are of two types *bhavi* and *abhavi* i.e., those who are worthy and unworthy respectively. Of these only the worthy will realize *Moksha*.

Disciple: Will all the worthy souls realize *Moksha*.

Master: No, there are two divisions of worthy souls viz awakened (*Samyag-drishti*) and perverted (*mithya-drishti*). Of these only the awakened will progress further.

Disciple: Will all the awakened souls realize *Moksha*?

Master: No! There are two divisions of awakened souls viz the vrati (self-disciplined and self-restrained) and the avrati (indisciplined and unrestrained). Of these only the former are worthy of *Moksha*.

Disciple: Will all the worthy, awakened and self-disciplined souls realize *Moksha*?

Master: Not so! There are two divisions of the Vrati souls viz., pramadi (spiritually inert) and apramadi (spiritually alert). Of these only the latter will ascend on the ladder of spiritually.

Disciple: Will all the spiritually alert souls realize *Moksha*?

Master: No! There are two types of the spiritually alert beings viz., those with four-fold passions of anger, conceit, deceit and greed and secondly those who have conquered the passions (*kashayas*).Of these the passionless ones will evolve and the passionate ones will tend to transmigrate until they conquer their passions.

Disciple: Will all the passionless souls realize *Moksha*?

Master: No! There are two divisions of the passionless souls viz., the enlightened (*kevalin* /omniscient) and the yet to be enlightened (*chadmasth*). Of these only the omniscients will realize Moksha

Disciple: Will all the omniscients realize *Moksha*?

Master: No! There are two kinds of omniscients viz., the ones that are embodied having the three *yogas* viz., mind, body and speech and those that are disembodied. Of these only the disembodied omniscient souls will realize *Moksha*.

Thus we see from the above dialogue between the disciple and the self-realized master that social transformation will remain a myth in the absence of spiritual insight and the purpose of dialogue and social transformation is the total transformation of humans from untruth to truth, darkness to light and from death to immortality. It is a long and arduous journey which cannot be completed in one birth but over many births and this ultimate journey begins with mastering the art of listening through Dialogue and understanding the higher truths of life.

Conclusion

The *Bhagavati Sutra* records the journey of liberation of the earnest aspirant irrespective of caste, creed, gender, nationality, etc. It begins with involving in a spiritual dialogue through listening and ends with spiritual dynamism and material inactivity and is revealed as follows:

Savane nane vinnane, pacchakhane ya sanjame
Ananhaye tave cheva, vodane akiriya siddhi

i.e., listening - knowledge – wisdom – life of resolutions – self-restraint – stoppage of influx of karma – austerity – annihilation of karma – inactivity – accomplishment.[12]

The above is in total contrast to the irrational activities of man which spring from ignorance and materialism and have increased manifold due to industrialization, globalization, technology, etc. These activities need to be monitored at all levels and need to be guided by the spiritual vision of the ancient saints and seers for society and mankind to sustain itself in the long run and avert another mass extinction. The energies unleashed by serious and deep-rooted personal transformation through spiritual insight can fuel the search for more humane social, self-sustainable systems.

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4
Jaina Social Order and Some Jaina Social Values

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The true essence of society indicates that man always lives in the company of other people. It is said that, 'Man is a social animal'. Aristotle, a famous philosopher explained that man lives in towns, cities, tribes, villages, but never alone. Loneliness brings him boredom and fear. Man needs society for his living, working and enjoying life. Society has become an essential condition for human life to arise and to continue. Human life and society always go together. Society is defined as the union itself, the organisation, the sum of formal relations in which associating individuals are bound together.[1]

Society and Religion

Religion plays a major role to keep the people connected in a society. All great religions of the world have laid great stress on morality as a vital factor regulating the conduct of an individual for his/her own good as also for the well-being of the society of which he/she is a member. The goal of society is maintenance of moral values of brotherhood, justice, peace.[2] Religion in simple words means 'righteousness' which is derived from the root verb *'religare'* which means to unite. Religion is a way of life. The process of purifying the soul is *Dharma* (Religion). Religion is the nature of a thing. Religion teaches us the art of living and helps us to realise real happiness, peace and attain liberation.

Religion has been the greatest force in the history of mankind and religious experience has been man's noblest experience. All religions are positive and particular and Jainism is no exception. It seeks to bring true happiness to its votaries by elevating them morally and enabling them to attain the highest spiritual perfection they are capable of.[3]

In every age, the most comprehensive thinkers have found in the religion of that time and country something they could accept and interpret so as to give that religion depth and universal application[3]. The Jaina *Tirthankaras* last of whom was Lord Mahavira and a number of outstanding Jaina saints, who flourished during the last 2600 years were no doubt great spiritual visionaries and social missionaries and it would be interesting to know about them and try to understand the religion preached and practised by them.[4]

Tradition of *Tirthankaras*

Jainism primarily proposes that the universe, with all its constituents or components is without a beginning or an end, being everlasting and eternal, and that the wheel of time incessantly revolves like a pendulum in half circles from the descending to the ascending stage having 24 *Tirthankaras* in each stage respectively[5]. Both the stages together form one *Kalachakra*. From time immemorial such infinite *Kalachakras* have passed and this process goes on in the infinite future. In this era the *Tirthankara* tradition began from Lord Rsabha Deva and ended with Lord Mahavira.

As Lord Mahavira happens to be the last *Tirthankara*, he is regarded by the common people as the founder of Jaina Religion. Obviously this is a misconception[6]. Now the historians have come to accept the fact that Lord Mahavira is not the founder of Jainism but he is only the last of the legendary *Tirthankaras* to carry forward the teachings of the *Jinas*. Every era has different set of *Tirthankara* and still there is no variation in their preaching. Before evolving spiritually they were like us, but due to spiritual insight and realization of truth, they evolved to the state of *Tirthankara* hood. They first practised the *Jina Dharma*, which is constituted of *Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Sanyama* (self-restraint) and *Tapa* (austerity) and perfected themselves and then preached the same for mankind to realise and release them from the worldly sojourn. This proves that every individual soul has the potential to become a *Jina*.

Who is A *Jina*

Literally '*Jina*' means a conqueror, i.e., one who has conquered the worldly passions like attachments, aversions, anger, greed, pride etc., by one's own strenuous efforts or otherwise and has liberated himself from the shackles of worldly existence, the cycle

of births and deaths.[7] *'Jina'* word is a peculiar word of Jaina Philosophy, which is used to denote *Arihant* (victors, perfected embodied souls), *Siddhas* (liberated Souls in *Nirvana*), *Tirthankara* (Ford maker) and *Kevali* (omniscience).

Tirthankara as the Ford Maker (_Tirtha_)

Tirthankaras attain infinite knowledge, perception, purity of conduct and power by destroying the four vitiating *karmas* and this is thoroughly discussed in Jaina spirituality.[8] The *Jinas* who after the attainment of *Kevala-Jnana* i.e. the infinite knowledge are not only concerned with their own liberation but are also concerned with showing the path of liberation to all and hence they are the originators of religion, founders of religious order-*'Chaturvidha sangh'*-the four fold Jaina order, which guides the soul to become free from the maze of worldly transmigration, which leads human beings across the great ocean of existence. The term *Tirthankara* literally means: *Tarati samsara-maharnavam yena nimittena tat tirtham. Tirtham karoti iti tirthankarah,* i.e., the contrivance which helps us to cross the great ocean of worldly life is known as *Tirtha* and the person who makes the *Tirtha* is termed as *Tirthankara.* Hence the *Tirthankaras* are the personages who delineate the path of final liberation or emancipation of all living beings from a succession of births and deaths.[9]

Establishment of the Ford

After they attain omniscience-enlightenment, they come amidst the society and share the knowledge which they have manifested in the form of *Kevala-Jnana,* all knowing. The knowledge that is revealed by them is *Sruta-Jnana,* scriptural knowledge which springs from omniscience. The medium of language chosen by them was Prakrit which was the common man's dialect. During the holy assembly called *Samavasharana,* many *bhavi-jivas* not just hear but listen to the holy discourse and imbibe the holy teaching and spiritually transform themselves. This discourse is the base for the establishment of the *Dharma-Tirtha- 'Caturvidha Sangh'*, the so called Jaina social order/ Jaina church/Jaina congregation/Jaina community.

Dharma-Tirtha

Acceptance and application of conduct in complete or partial form is called as *Dharma-Tirtha* and renunciation of sinful activities

is right conduct. Conduct and righteousness are synonymous. *Tirtha* is an embodiment of righteousness. Those souls who are righteous and are committed to righteousness are called as *"Sadhu, Sadhvi, Sravaka* and *Sravika"* and due to this reason they are entitled as *Tirtha*.[10]

Chaturvidha Sangh-jaina Social Order

The term *Sangh* embraces the four-fold Jaina order of whole Jaina community:

- *Sadhu* (Monks)
- *Sadhvi* (Nuns)
- *Sravaka*(Lay-householder)
- *Sravika* (Female Lay-householder).

The ascetic order plays a very important role in Jainism, it observes the teachings of *Tirthankaras* rigorously, whereas the laity follow the teachings partially as they are involved in the worldly activities and in earning their livelihood, however, they follow the teachings of *Tirthankara* to the best of their ability.[11] This difference in the degree of their practice is the basis of their code of conduct. The code of conduct for the householder is called *Sravaka-dharma* and that of ascetics is called *Muni- dharma*.

Jaina Social Order and the Society

Man's conduct in society is linked with ethics through metaphysical ideas and ideals. Jaina ethics is the most glorious part of Jainism and it is simplicity in itself. There is no conflict between man's duty to himself and to the society. The highest good of society is the highest good to the individual.[12] The Jaina *Sangh* is involved in all major decisions affecting the community and has supreme authority over the individual orders. There is both respect and individual control of one order over the other. The laity respect and learn Jaina teachings from the ascetic order.[13] The monks and nuns in turn guide the laymen spiritually and ethically, thus laying the foundation for a moral social community. The basic necessities of monks and nuns are met by the laity who is steadfast, devoted, righteous and vegetarian. Jaina ethics mentions the 35 code of conduct of laymen who is eager to evolve spiritually. These 35 codes of conduct are pre-requisite for a *Sravaka-Dharma* and they also lay the foundation of a moral social order. We also get the reference in the Jaina scriptures such as *Sthananga Sutra,* that laymen and women

are called as *"Amma-Piyaa"* – *'Amma'*-Mother, *'Piyaa'*- Father of the ascetics, because if an ascetic deviates from the committed path of self-restraint, the laity who are righteous and learned can correct the faltering ascetic and enable him to be steadfast in the supreme *Jina's* order, provided he is a steadfast practising laity.

Thus we see that these four viz., *Sadhu, Sadhvi, Sravaka, and Sravika* are like the four wheels of the chariot of *Jinashashan*. Together they practice and propagate the eternal teachings of *Ahimsa* (Non-Violence), *Anekanta* (Non-Absolutism) *and Aparigraha* (Non-Possession).

Unique Features of the *Sangh* - Jaina Social Order

Nandi Sutra (5-14) which is one of the fundamental (*Mula-Sutra*) Jaina scriptures beautifully explains some of the unique features of the *Sangh* using various metaphors like that of *Nagar* (city), *Chakra* (wheel), *Rath* (chariot), *Chandra* (moon) , *Surya* (sun), *Samudra* (sea), *Padma* (lotus), and *Sumeru* (mountain).

Eulogy of the *Sangh*

The *Sangh- Nagar* (City): Just as the city is adorned with palatial houses, valuable gems, clean streets and secured borders likewise the *Sangh* which is compared to a city is adorned with forgiveness and other virtues, scriptural knowledge, *Samyaktva etc.* and is protected by purity of conduct respectively. The *Nandi Sutra* further says that the *Sangh*-city gives us all spiritual prosperity. It further says that whosoever comes and takes refuge in this *Sangh*-city will become spiritually prosperous.

The *Sangh-Chakra* (Wheel): Secondly the *Sangh* is compared to a wheel. This wheel like *Sangh* has discipline as its hub (the central part of a wheel), twelve-types of austerity as its spokes and has *Samyaktva* as its radiant rim. This disc-weapon like *Sangh* cuts the bonds of rebirth, because only a spiritually evolved soul practicing austerities with complete discipline can get rid of the shackles of births and deaths.

The *Sangh- Rath* (Chariot): Here the *Sangh* is compared to a gorgeous chariot. Just as the tinkling bells of the horses in the chariot, so also the *Sangh* echoes with the divine sound of *Swadhyaya* (self-study) through scriptural study. If one goes to any Jaina community they can see that the members of the Sangh will be absorbed in scriptural study.

The *Sangh- Padma* (Lotus): The *Sangh* is next compared to a lotus. Just as the lotus remains unaffected by the place in which it is born, by the slime of the muddy water etc, (there is a wax coating under the lotus leaf which enables it to remain unaffected by its surrounding likewise whosoever takes shelter in the *Sangh* will benefit by the scriptural knowledge and the right conduct and learn to remain detached the lotus, thus conquering materialism and pursuing spirituality.

The *Sangh- Chandra* (Moon): The *Sangh* is next compared to the moon. The moon which is very pleasant and cool, likewise the *Sangh* is also very spiritually soothing. It gives shelter to the suffering mankind. Just as there are spots on the moon likewise self-restraint and austerity are the two dynamics of the *Sangh* which are compared to the moon. The eclipse of falsehood/perversion can never shadow this *Sangh*-moon, which is radiant with the light of *Samyaktva* i.e., right vision.

The *Sangh- Surya* (Sun): The *Sangh* is next compared to a sun. When the sun rises, the innumerable stars are not to be seen, likewise when the knowledge of the omniscient shines like the sun, stars like pseudo practitioners find no place. The *Sangh* like the sun shines with all its glory, thus removing the darkness of ignorance, perversion, false conduct, misery, suffering, etc. In the light of the sun just as everything is seen clearly, so also an enlightened aspirant (*Sadhaka*) of the *Sangh* knows the secrets of life and death. He knows the art of right living and the art of dying.

The *Sangh- Samudra* (Sea): The *Sangh* is next compared to the sea. Just as we have the sea shore likewise the pursuit in self-restraint will beget the end of worldly transmigration. Just as there are aquatic plants and animals likewise the *Sangh*-sea is full of spiritual contemplation in the form of scriptural study which dispels all *Karmas*. Deep down the sea bed are precious pearls likewise meditation, tolerance etc are the pearls in the *Sangh* which is compared to the sea.

The *Sangh- Sumeru* (Mountain): At the end of eulogy the *Sangh* is compared to *Mt.Meru*. Just as the mountain has its foundation, likewise right-faith is the foundation of the *Sangh*. Discipline, self-control and subduing of passions are its golden rocks. Sublime, pious pursuits are its high cliffs. Self-study *(Swadhyaya)*, chaste disposition, contentment, etc are like the forest which provides bliss

even to the Gods. Twenty eight types of *labdhis* (extraordinary powers) including *Amarsh* (the healing touch) are the divine herbs found on this mountain. The ascetics are like wish-fulfilling trees. Pure streams of *Samvara* (to stop the influx of evil *karmas*) flow here. Peacock like *Sravakas* dance here in ecstasy and sing hymns of five supreme ones (*Panch-Paramesthins)*. Echo of these musical sounds emanate from the caverns of discourse halls. As the Meru mountain remains unmoved and stable even in the midst of terrible storms and deluge, so remains this religious organization of the *Jinas* amidst the verbal tirade of the antagonists.

Thus as a city is a means of protection for citizens, so is *sangh* for the practisers or ascetics and *Sravakas*. As a chariot moves on a path so does a practitioner on the path shown by the *Jina*. As *chakra* is a means of victory or attainment of a goal, so is *sangh* that helps the ascetic in attaining his goal. Lotus is the symbol of non- adhesion or detachment. The moon is symbol of serenity and cool. The sun is the symbol of light and radiance. The sea is the symbol of expanse and tranquillity. And the *Sumeru* Mountain is the symbol of stability and stillness. *Sangh* has all these qualities.[14]

Jaina Social Values

Today, at all levels in our society and across all professions and vocations we find corruption, fraudulent behaviour and unethical practices where one person cannot rely on another person, where one person can do any sort of illegal thing for his benefit at the cost of others. So, we have to pursue values of highest order based on ethics. The code of conduct guiding our action can give us better insight and direction. Unless a person believes in moral values and ethics no amount of technical education and training can motivate him to be independent and firm in ethical behaviour. So apart from technical education we need education in values. Values are the grace and beauty of life. These are central to the moral philosophy of human civilization and its legal institutions.[15]

Values like faith, forgiveness, self restraint, mutual love and respect, humility, modesty, etc are essential to raise human life to higher level both spiritually and socially. These values seek to emulate the beauty of nature, divine quality of life and stimulate our internal strength to enjoy our life as an individual and as association of people in our family, society and community. Some of the social values are highlighted here.

Faith

The first precept to a follower of Jainism is that he should posses and to cultivate an intelligent and reasoned faith in that religion. It must be of right type and should be free from false notions about *Dev*-God, *Guru*-Preceptor and *Dharma*-Religion, because Right-Faith is the pre-requisite for every soul to attain liberation. Tatvaartha Sutra also mentions that *"Samyak-darshana-jnana-caritrani-moksa-margah" i.e.,* Right-Faith, Right-Knowledge and Right-Conduct together constitute the path of liberation.[16] In the same way faith plays a major role in a society. Faith in all aspects of trust, confidence and reliance brings happiness. If a society is to be happy, the members of the society must conduct themselves in such a way that they can have implicit faith in each other.

Self Restraint

To stop the mind and the senses from indulging in evil thinking and sinful activity is called *Sanyama* or restraint i.e. Self-control. It is revealed that the nature of *Dharma* as discussed earlier is *'Ahimsa Sanyama and Tapa,* i.e., Non-violence, Self-restraint and Austerity are the most auspicious and the best in the world. From the spiritual point of view it is said that self- restraint is life and restraintlessness leads to death. Only that soul is protected whose mind, body and speech are restrained. A person lacking self-control may cause some practical gain to some people, but he cannot help cheating, cruelty and exploiting others. A person having self-control may not be of any practical help even to a few people, but he will be honest and kind to others and he will not think of exploiting anybody and this indeed is the basis of a healthy society.

Forgiveness

Dissatisfaction, failure, unfavourable situation, desires, wants and the like arouse anger. The angry man hurts himself and vitiates the atmosphere. Its fierce aspect is enmity. Anger reacts immediately but enmity forms a knot. It burns itself and others too. An angry man wants to take instantaneous revenge. Anger itself is an intense emotion which sometimes lasts for generations. Forgiveness (*Kshama*) promotes tolerance. It is to control anger even when provoked. To be calm and cool even in adverse circumstances, to remain equanimous even when aroused, is forgiveness. The resultant is tolerance and forgetfulness of others' short comings.

Forgiveness includes not to be subjected to anger and it also means to be at peace with oneself. It's no use making a show of forgiveness when the fire of hatred is burning inside. Forgiveness is natural but anger is super-imposed. It is due to the association of the *Karmas.* The angry man shakes whereas the forgiving one is steady. He is fearless.[17] It is said, *'kshama veerasa bhushanam' i.e.,* forgiveness is an ornament of the brave. A spiritual aspirant forgives and makes others forgive.

The Jainas celebrate *Samvatsari Parva as* universal forgiveness day which is the festival of Forgiveness. The most important feature of *Paryushana Parva* is *'Khamat-khamana'* (forgiving and asking for forgiveness). We get the reference in *Avashyayaka Sutra* as,

"Khamemi savva jive, Savve jiva khamantu me,
Mitti me savva bhuyesu, veram majjham na kenai"

i.e., I forgive all beings, May all souls forgive me, I'm on friendly terms with all; I have no animosity towards any other soul[18] .

The simple procedure of this ritual is that the moment one gets some ill feelings for someone else, one should immediately ask for forgiveness. If that is not possible, one should do so the very day at the time of sunset *(devasik)* or sunrise *(raayasik);* if not at the end of the fortnight (*pakshik*) or at least once in four months (*chaturmasik*) and even if that is not possible then the complex must be removed by the end of the *Paryushana Parva*. If a person does not mutually forgive even up to the great occasion of the expiation ritual, he loses all his religiosity. From this point of view, *Paryushana Parva* may be known as the festival for removing one's shortcomings. This festival plays a significant role in establishing the great social and human value of forgiveness and enables people to live in harmony.[19]

Humility

Today all around us, there is an atmosphere of restlessness and tension. Corruption, egoism and the like are on the increase. In such difficult times, to live happily and peacefully and to make one's own life fragrant with the perfume of righteous virtues, there is a great necessity of humility. Humility or Modesty is one of the internal penances in Jainism. Humility is that virtue which makes us capable citizens, gifted sons, beloved disciples and clear to one and all. Humility refines our lives and provides us with tension

free life. Arrogance is what makes a person's life painful. When humility comes in, arrogance goes away and thus we realise happiness and peace. According to Jainism, Humility i.e., *Vinay* is the root of religion, it is that mode of activity which in a special manner takes us towards virtues, towards religion, towards justice and morality or ethics and it is also a means to attain liberation.[20]

Responsibility

In Jainism, God is not responsible for our actions *(Karmas)* and does not punish or reward. God did not create this world. I am alone responsible for my actions, thoughts, and words. The *Karma* theory enables us to take responsibility for all our actions and reactions.[21] When we become responsible we also learn to live with discipline and thus creating a harmonious society. Every soul is endowed with the will power to manage different emotions but the *karmic* bondage is intense that we fail to exercise our will power in the right direction and we violate the social laws and take to violence, etc and disrupt the social order.

Mutual-Love

In the *Dasavaikalika Sutra* it is said that,

"Savve jiva vi icchanti, jivium na marijjium
Tamha pani vaham ghoram, niggantha vajjayanti nam"

i.e., 'All living beings desire to live, none wants to die. Knowing thus a *nirgrantha* (fetterless ascetic) gives up violence in all its dimensions.[22] All souls are potentially divine, identical and yet unique. Hence the feelings and emotions cannot be very different. As you love your life, so also others do theirs. Those who desire their own good, do not abuse, insult, injure, kill, rob nor do they torture anybody. But we see in the society that humans show utter disregard towards other living beings even in their highly evolved times. In fact, many of the research, entertainment, fashion, dietary and religious practices of today involve intense violence, killing and suffering thus causing total chaos in the society. We fail to understand that we are just one component in the web of the ecosystem and that we must respect all living beings. Never hurt other's self-esteem. He, who hurts others, gets them beaten up, or supports such misbehaviour adds only to lasting enmity[23] . Not to treat others as you wish to be treated by them is indeed violence. It is Non-violence alone that can generate good feelings for others.

The Jainas believe that Non-violence is the supreme religion– *Ahimsa parmo dharmah!* It postulates reverence for life and avoidance of injury. It means kindness and compassion. He who feels pleased by injuring others is mean. Revengefulness will smother your soul. Love should replace hatred. Selflessness should over-ride selfishness.[24] Non-violence is all love and harmony. It regards all living beings alike. It believes in reforming man. Even a criminal may be regenerated.[25] Hence, Non-violence is love and affection for one and all and an important tool for social harmony.

Respect for other's View

The universe is a composite of groups, consisting of adverse pairs like knowledge and ignorance, pleasure and sorrow, life and death, and so on. There is a purpose for every element. Reality possesses infinite characteristics which cannot be perceived or known at once by ordinary man. Different people think different aspects of the same reality and therefore their partial findings lead to contradictions. Hence they indulge in debates claiming that each of them is completely true. The Jaina philosophers thought over this conflict and tried to reveal the whole truth. They established the theory of Non- Absolutism (*Anekantavada*) i.e., Relative pluralism. It teaches tolerance, co-existence and respect for others - all necessary for creating a harmonious society. *Anekantavada* respects the views of others and as a result one's own opinions will be accorded their worth. Relative pluralism aims to unify, co-ordinate, harmonise and synthesise individuals, and even conflicting viewpoints into a comprehensible whole. It is like music, which blends different notes to make perfect harmony.[26] "The intellectual confusion is created by *Ekanta* while the cobwebs of confusion are cleared by *Anekanta*".

Limitation of Possession

Society must emphasise to the members that some things are right and some things are wrong, and see to it that they observe the limitations. It is told in the Jaina scriptures that greed is the root of all sins. In the *Sutrakrtanga Sutra* (1/1/2), it is mentioned that those having possession of whatever sort, great or small living or non-living, cannot get rid of sufferings and conflicts.[27] Possession and hoarding lead to economic inequality, which may sometimes cause wars. Thus, to achieve peace and the norm of non-violence

in social life, the prime need is to restrict the will for possession, mental as well as physical, that is why Mahavira propounded the vow of complete non-possession for the monks and nuns, while for laity, he propounded the vow of limitation of possession (*Parigraha-Parimana*) and the vow of control over consumption *(Bhogopabhoga-Parimana).* Jainism holds that if we want to establish peace on earth then economic inequality and vast differences in the mode of consumptions should be at least minimised. Among the causes of wars and conflicts, which disturb our social peace, the will for possession is the prime, because it causes economic imbalance. Due to economic imbalance or inequality, classes of poor and rich come into existence and result in class conflicts. According to Jainism, it is only through the self-imposed limitation of possession and simple living; we can restore peace and prosperity on the earth[28]. Thus the Jaina laity is inspired to take to a life of partial vows and self-imposed resolutions.

Evolution of an Enlightened Society

It is said that *'Annaye dhammo'* i.e., obedience is dharma. Mahavira never said sing my glory or take to rituals with blind faith on the other hand, he said *Panna sammikhaye dhammam – Uttaradhyayana Sutra* (23.25). i.e., logically analyse the dharma, and then practise it.[29] There are two kinds of Jainas- those who take to complete or partial vows and are observing spiritual life and contributing towards harmonious society. They are said to be the four-fold *Tirtha*. There are others who are only Jainas by birth but not in deed and lead a materialistic life and are out of the *Tirtha*.

Table 4.1: Differences in Spiritualistic and Materialistic life

Spiritual Life (Life as *Tirtha*)	**Material Life (Life Out of the *Tirtha*)**
• One who is the member of the *Tirtha* will be spiritually motivated, socially conscious and environment friendly.	• One who is out of the Tirtha will be steeped in materialism i.e., sensual pleasures. He may not be spiritually motivated, socially conscious and environment friendly.
• Member of the *Tirtha* will be compassionate, believing in the law of giving thus working towards a healthy society.	• Such a person will be short sighted and will be cruel taking to terrorism, non-vegetarianism etc.

Spiritual Life (Life as *Tirtha*)	**Material Life (Life Out of the *Tirtha*)**
• One who is the member of the *Tirtha* is obedient to the commandments of the *Jinas;* he is committed to spiritual living.	• One who is not the member of the *Tirtha* will neither understand nor follow the commandments on the other hand will break them at every step.
• One who is the member of the *Tirtha* will eventually be liberated from the shackles of births and death, old-age, miseries, diseases, poverty suffering etc.	• Such a person can never be liberated due to his craving for material and sensual pleasures and will wander endlessly in the cycle of rebirths.
• One who is the member of the *Tirtha* will lead a life that is praise worthy, ideal, noble, pious, non-violent and compassionate.	• Such a person is intoxicated with the wine of materialism and is unaware of the consequences of his shallow living.
• The path of spirituality is the path of truth and truth alone triumphs. A person who is committed to self realization and spirituality is committed to truth and realizes it ultimately.	• The path of materialism is the path of untruth. Such a person will live a life of illusion, wandering in the whirlpool of *Samsara*.
• A person who is spiritual is an *Aradhaka,* he will take to the *Sadhana* in the form of self-realization, self-purification and self-conquer.	• A person who is out of the *Tirtha* is a *Viradhaka,* i.e., he will break the law at every step and bind *Karmas* incessantly only to reap their fruit in future existences.
• The practice of Jainism may not be possible for all. There are categories of Jains. (i) One is the complete practitioners like *Munis*. (ii) Partial practitioners like the *Sravakas*. (iii) Believers called *Samyak-drishti*. (iv)Non-believers called *Mithyaa-drishti*. The first out of the three are the believers.	• Those who are out of the *Tirtha* will neither believe in nor praise the sacred part but on the other hand criticize it and bind demeritorious *Karmas*.

Spiritual Life (Life as *Tirtha*)	**Material Life (Life Out of the *Tirtha*)**
• Such a person will learn the art of living and will learn to live peacefully amidst all adversities.	• In spite of all the favorable conditions such a person will not be at peace and will endlessly crave for more material pleasures and luxuries.
• Such a person will take to righteous and pure contemplation in *Dharma-dhyana* and *Shukla-dhyana* and destroy great heaps of *Karmas*. He will realize the Kingdom of God (*Moksha*) sooner or later, so reveal the scriptures.	• A person who is not the member of the *Tirtha* will be engaged in the mournful and cruel contemplation i.e., *Artha-dhyana* and *Raudra-dhyana* and will not only burden him-self with *Karmas*, but will take to unethical, immortal, illegal practices and will be a nuisance to the society.

Thus the enlightened members of the society will enable the society to evolve in the right direction. If the members of the society are not enlightened spiritually and morally then exploitation of resources and people, fear of violence, poverty unemployment will be on the rise. The members of the society are guided by the teachings of the *Jinas* and so the crime rate is also minimal in the Jaina society. There is so much that Jainism has to offer to the world but unfortunately the world is yet to open to Jainism.

Conclusion

It is true that the main aim of Jainism is to attain freedom from transmigration and the whole Jaina ethics has been based on this foundation. All rules of conduct are so designed as to secure the aim as early as possible. As there is no outside agency to help the individual in his efforts to attain liberation, it is natural that more importance was given to the individual. But this does not mean that ethics was confined to individuals alone. On the contrary, the ethical code was evolved for the whole society. Jaina ethics provides tools for the welfare of the society and the individual. It recognises the need for taking care of the society, and also aspires to bring the highest conceivable form of good within the individual's reach. The social aspect of individual's life was never ignored. An individual was never conceived as separate from the society and social life. He was enjoined to achieve his goal while leading the

worldly life which necessarily involves relations with other members of the society. It is clear that social life was never considered as an impediment to one's spiritual progress if necessary precautions are taken. Do your duty and do it as humanely as you can - this, in brief, is the primary principle of Jainism. The prescribed rules of conduct are not limited for practising within the members of the Jaina community; Jaina ethics and values embraces not only followers of Jainism but in a true sense all living beings. But it is contented that Jaina ethics and values solve the individual problem of attaining spiritual merit and at the same time shows the way of solving all outstanding social and world problems.[30]

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5

Comprehensive Concept of Ahiṃsā and its Application in Real Life

D.R. Mehta

1.0 Introduction

Ours is the age of reason. Asymmetrically ours is also the age of violence. Never before in the human history there was so much of violence. Relationships at individual, social, national and international levels are often afflicted by violence, in degrees large or small. In such situation generally the reactive remedy adopted is violence without realizing that violence begets violence, which in turn, generates further violence. Therefore, there is a need for a workable and effective alternative to break this chain of violence. *Ahiṃsā* or the opposite of violence, properly understood and sincerely implemented, may be such a relevant option for ensuring harmony, survival and dignified living. *Ahiṃsā* is also a way of conflict resolution.

While many philosophical and religious systems have referred to *Ahiṃsā* or some of its forms and essence; Jainism developed this principle of *Ahiṃsā* adopted it as the primary doctrine and detailed it to the minutest levels or practice. The growth and content of *Ahiṃsā* in Jainism is such that Albert Schweitzer, one of the greatest humanitarians that the world has produced, state thus in his book – *Indian Throught and its development*.

"The lying down of the commandment not to kill and not to damage is one of the greatest events in the spiritual history of mankind. So far as we know it is for the first time clearly expressed by Jainism". Late Dr. D.S. Kothari, a great Indian scientist, in a similar vein, observed that the history of *Ahiṃsā* is also the evolutionary history of mankind.

2.0 Concept of Ahiṃsā

Before proceeding further it may be appropriate to dwell on the concept of *Ahiṃsā* and its applications to real life situations. *Ahiṃsā* is a benign and benevolent concept. It is an expression of compassion. It means reverence for life. It is recognition of the personality and accompanying dignity, naturally due to all living beings. Alongside this lofty and altruistic connotation, *Ahiṃsā* on the other negative implies non-killing and non – harming. This is equally important. *Ahiṃsā* is a combination of empathy and abstention. Thus it is a comprehensive concept. However, quite mistakenly some of the thinkers, and believers, ignoring the original treatises, references and their true spirit, tend to take a lop–sided view and reduce *Ahiṃsā* into a mere negative principle or practice, depriving it of its humaneness and nobility.

2.1 Definitions and Interpretations of Ahiṃsā

The glory of non-violence as a doctrine of religion has arisen from the vision of similarity of souls. This doctrine is narrated and analyzed in the *āgamas* as follows:

1. All violence deserves to be discarded because it leads to sorrow and fear. This is the basic argument of the doctrine of non-violence.
2. Violence means ending somebody's life or torturing others. Still, the blemishes born of violence depend only on infatuation or attachment and jealousy etc. If there is no infatuation or attachment, mere ending cannot come under the category of violence. This constitutes an analysis of non-violence.
3. The purports of the blemish do not depend upon the relative importance of the size, number and senses of the living beings that are killed. It depends upon the result of the violating persons or the intensity or the otherwise, his knowing or unknowing action or the use of force. This constitutes the purport of non-violence.

The three matters mentioned above became fruitful in the thought and conduct of lord Mahāvīra and are woven in the *Āgamas*. Howsoever spiritual an individual or a group of individual's may be, when they ponder over the question of sustaining life with self-control, the above mention analysis and stages naturally arise from it.

However so let us see how non-violence developed further on in the light of various sects of Jainism.

Jainism has two broad sects namely Śvetāmbaraand Digambara. Both these sects are further splintered into large number of sub–sects, which are headed by different *Ācāryas*, many of whom have defined *Ahiṃsā* in their own way, unmindful of canon and original texts. Some of them brazenly describe the positive aspects of *Ahiṃsā*, like saving the lives of man and other creatures, feeding the hungry, providing water to thirsty, helping the sick with medicines etc, as undesirable, because in their view, these activities result in generating of *karmas*, which inhibit one's liberation. They treat such activities as an expression of attachment, which according to them is the cause of bondage and not salvation.

One of the sub – sects of Jainas has even gone to the extent of describing the act of saving the life of a man or animal in distress, as violence.[1] There could not have been a greater travesty or distortion. The problem gets further compounded when such scholars try to project such views as a part of the Jaina religion. Such views, when picked up by scholars, particularly the western ones, lead to their wrong presentation of Jainism. One such example is the book – Heart of Jainism – by Stevenson, who, perhaps getting such erroneous views concluded that Jainism had no heart at all.

When such scholars or *ācāryas* are asked to provide the canonical or original references in support of their unusual stony views, either refer to some texts of much later times or conveniently just parry such questions. Both for the sake of purity of thought and practicability such views need to be questioned and corrected to present an authentic picture of *Ahiṃsā* in Jainism.

Ācārāṅga Sūtra, a Śvetāmbara canon comprising the first discourse of Mahāvīra, the 24th and the last Tīrthaṅkara of the Jains, delivered about 2550 years ago, defines *Ahiṃsā* thus:

"The saint with true vision conceives compassion for all the world, in east and west and south and north, and so, knowing the scared lore, he will preach and spread and proclaim it, among those who strive and those who do not, in fact among all those who are willing to hear him...He should do no injury to himself or anyone else..The great sage becomes a refuge for injured creatures like an island which the can not overwhelm."[2]

In another verse *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* spells out *Ahiṃsā* as:

"Thus say all the perfect souls and blessed ones, weather past, present or to come-thus hey speak, thus they declare, thus they proclaim: All things breathing, all things existing, all things living, all beings whatever, should not be slain or treated with violence, or insulted, or tortured, or driven away. This is the pure unchanging eternal low, which the wise ones who know the world have proclaimed, among the earnest and the non-earnest, among the loyal and the non-loyal, among those who have given up punishing others and those who have not done so, among those who are weak and those who are not, among those who delight in worldly ties and those who do not. This is the truth. So it is. Thus it is declared in this religion"[3]. Tattvārtha Sūtra of Umāsvāti/Umāsvāmi, a treatise acceptable to both Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects of Jainas, has also stressed the positive side of Ahiṃsā:

"One should cultivate the feelings of fraternity toward all beings, pleasantness toward the proficient, compassion toward the destitute and equanimity toward the disrespectful unbelievers".[4]

Vīrasena, the renowned Digambara ācārya, who lived about 1200 years ago, described compassion as the intrinsic nature of soul in his voluminous commentary of *Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama* popularly known as *Dhavalā*.

Kundakunda another great Digambara Ācārya, who lived about 2000 years ago, and who is known more for stress on abstract spiritual path for the soul, enjoined that one should provide food to the hungry and water to the thirsty as it constituted *Anukampā* or Compassion.[5] It may be noted that according to *Tattvārtha Sūtra*, liberation of the soul is possible only through the composite path of *Samyak Darśana* (right belief). *Samyak Jñāna* (right knowledge) and *Samyak Cāritra* (right conduct). Further *Bhāṣya* (commentary) on *Tattvārtha Sūtra* enumerates five characteristics of *Samyak Darśana* of which the prominent one is *Anukampā* or Compassion. In short, according to canons, liberation of soul is not possible in the absence of compassion. A human quality like compassion, which according to *Tattvārtha Sūtra* and its commentary helps the process of liberation, obviously cannot be the cause of bondage.

Ācārya Kundakunda in his book – *Bodha Pāhuḍa* stated that only that is *Dharma*, which is leavened with compassion.

There are even more positive and emphatic directions in the original canons of Śvetāmbara Jainas which promote humanism

and compassionate action, which are synonyms of *Ahiṃsā*. For example *Sthānānga Sūtra* – (chapter eight) ordains the following:

- Be ready to listen to hither to unknown noble doctrine.
- Be ready to follow noble conduct.
- Be ready to block inflow of *Pāpa- Karmas* through practice of austerities.
- Be ready to help and provide refuge to the destitute and helpless.
- Be ready to educate the uneducated.
- Be ready to serve the ailing with joy.
- Be ready to resolve differences, strife, conflicts etc. among the colleagues and bring about harmony.

Similarly the following dialogue between Mahāvīra and Gaṇadhara Gautama reported in: *Āvaśyaka-sūtra*, commentary by Haribhadra, requires in similar commitment:

Bhagavan! Who is to be commended, the one who serves the ailing and distressed?

Gautama- He who serves the ailing and distressed is to be commended.

Bhagavan! Why is it so?

Gautama! He, who serves the ailing distressed, serves me. He who serves me serves the ailing and distressed. This is the pith and substances of the doctrine of *Arihantas*. Therefore, O Gautama! I say – he who serves the ailing and distressed, serves the ailing and distressed. Therefore, one who serves it to be commended?[6]

In fact the Jaina scriptures are replete with large number of equally effective references, which highlight the need of compassion along with non-killing and non-harming. Recently a book *"Sakārātmaka Ahiṃsā :Śāstrīya aura Cāritrika ādhāra"* authored by Mr. K. L. Lodha and published by Prakrit Bharti Academy, Jaipur (India) has extensively gleaned verses from Śvetāmbara *āgamas*and Digambara sources to put across this aspect of the wholeness of the concept of *Ahiṃsā*.

Both of the Jaina clergy and laity, great and minor vows (Vratas) are mandated by Jaina canons. These are common to all sects of Jainas. Among them, the first vow or *Vrata* is for *Ahiṃsā*. The classical definitions of these vows for *Ahiṃsā* are as under (mainly for clergy):

"I renounce all killing (included hurting) of living beings, whether subtle or gross, whether movable or immovable. Neither shall I myself kill (not hurt) living beings, nor cause others to do it, nor consent to it".[7]

Aṇuvrata for *Ahiṃsā*: (mainly for laity)

"I renounce all intentional killing (including hurting) of gross (mobile) living beings. Neither shall I myself kill (nor hurt) living beings nor cause others to o it".[8]

Apart from being both positive and negative, *Ahiṃsā* is a comprehensive concept from another angel as well. *Ahiṃsā* does not mean mere absence of physical violence. It is also a psychic phenomenon. *Ahiṃsā* has to be practiced at levels of *"mana"* (thought) *"vacana"* (speech) and *"kāya"* (body). In fact the basis of violence is *"Bhāva"* (thought and feeling). There is a possibility that there may be no *Hiṃsa* (Violence) even if there is physical harm, as in case of the death of a patient in an operation in the absence of the intent to kill. On the other hand, even without physical violence, an adverse or unwholesome thought may be tantamount to violence.

Jainism has extend the idea of culpability regarding violence to a situation where the person has abetted pr approved the harm or killing. No loophole is left out. This approach adds to the fullness of the concept of *Ahiṃsā*.

According to Jainism, the concept and practice of *Ahiṃsā* transcends the human beings and covers even the smallest of the creatures. All life is sacred and as such cannot be tortured, maimed, or destroyed and instead has to be respected. This is a unique feature that further enlarges the range and intensity of this idea and conduct of *Ahiṃsā*.

Mahāvīra also emphasized friendship (maitrīormitty) with all the beings at all levels over the entire universe. He said, "May I be the friend of all beings. Further I should not harbor any ill-will with any being anywhere" (Pratikramaṇa Sūtra/Āvaśyaka Sūtra). Friendship is nothing but the positive aspect of *Ahiṃsā*. *Maitrī* and *Ahiṃsā* are two sides of the same coin.

Viśeṣāvaśyaka Sūtra provides sixty synonymous of *Ahiṃsā* including *anukampā* (compassion) and *Dayā* (piety). Some of these aspects have been specially brought out because they exhibit the keenness of the Jaina scholars to delve deep into the physical and

psychological nature of man and his actions, and present a philosophy and practice which is all-embracing and beneficial. Additionally, these facts have a bearing on the actual practice of *Ahiṃsā* in real life, an aspect that would be dwelt with later.

Shorn of the arguments based on religiosity, the commonsensical and rational basis of *Ahiṃsā* is provided both by Mahāvīra and Buddha. *Acārāṅga Sūtra* states:

"..... in support of this truth (Ahiṃsā) I ask you a question. Is sorrow or pain desirable to you? If you say, 'yes it is,' it would be a lie as it is against the evident reality. If you say, 'no it is not.' You will be telling the truth. What I want to add to the truth expressed by you is that as the sorrow or pain is not desirable to you, so it is to all which breath, exists, lives or have any essence of life. To you and all it is undesirable, painful and repugnant".[9]

This brings out the universal abhorrence to pain or sorrow and leads to the conclusion that since nobody wants pain or sorrow, we should not cause pain or sorrow to anyone. Similarly canons also stress that since all beings desire happiness, our efforts should be to work towards the happiness to all. Kant, the great western philosopher, was one asked whether he knew what the truth was. He, with his humility, replied in the negative. Further on being asked whether he could at least suggest the path of reaching the truth, he mentioned one of his categorical imperatives namely that something which is truth must be universal. Using this Kantian touchstone, *Ahiṃsā* emerges as the truth, because of its universality in terms of revulsion to pain or killing and common desire for happiness among all the living beings.

Buddha also preaches similar views.

The other support for *Ahiṃsā* is ethical. Jainism believes in plurality and equality of souls. No soul has an ethical right to dominate or harm the other beings. All souls deserve similar treatment. By harming another soul, in a way, we are harming our own similar souls. *Ācārānga Sutra* again sums up this idea:

- "That which you consider destroyable is (like) yourself.
- That which you consider disciplinable is (like) yourself.
- That which you consider worth harming is (like) yourself.
- That which you consider worth subjugating is (like) yourself.
- That which you consider worth killing is (like) yourself.

- The result of action done by you has to be borne by you, so do not destroy anything".

The principle of equality of souls however is at times applied wrongly. In Jaina canons the synonyms of *"Hiṃsā"* or violence is the expression *"prāṇātipāta"* which means that the sin of killing is in proportion to the *"prāṇās"* taken. It is a subtle aspect, which needs to be explained. Soul or *"Jīva"* is indestructible and what can be killed is only the body. For bodies Mahāvīra gives a five-fold classification. According to him bodies are one – sensed, two – sensed, three-sensed, four-sensed and five-sensed. The micro level creatures in air, water earths etc are one-sensed. On the other hand man or other large creatures have five-senses. The level of *"prāṇā"* in these categories of life forms increases with the number of senses. For example man has ten *"prāṇās"*. According to Mahāvīra the killing of a man is far more sinful than the killing of lower forms of lives possessing lesser number of "Karmas" by being a vegetarian rather than a meat eater.

There is yet another aspect. Violence is an expression of power and not ethics. Violence is possible with means of confinement, punishment, destruction etc. but such instrumentalities have little ethical justification except possibly in case of self-defense. Taking a subjective and insular view, some philosophies and doctrine tried to make man the center of universe and reduced all other beings as subordinate ones, required to sub serve him only. However there is no ethical or rational basis of such a proposition. But resultant rituals (as distinguished from ethics) arising out of such man-centric arrogant views are unfortunately projected as mandatory principals to be followed and even fought for.

Rhetorically Max Heindel asks, "We cannot create so much as one particle of dust, therefore what right have we to destroy the very least form?"

2.2 Science of Ahiṃsā

Ahiṃsā also receives science-based commendation. This is a new development. Science, as the source of instruments and weapons of destruction and mass killing and violence, has been the cause of maximum and unprecedented violence in the world. But paradoxically science now is providing the most cogent and convincing conceptual basis of *Ahiṃsā*. The emerging science of Genetics unravels the ultimate structure and combination of genes

in form of chromosomes. The results are amazing. The difference between the genes of a man and chimpanzee is hardly 0.6 percent. The swine and man again may not differ by more than 5 percent in their genes. Many more such parallels have been given by science. In fact the genetic code of life is similar from the smallest bacteria of man. With this kind of closeness and similarity between man and other living beings, violence against the latter is scientifically indefensible. Just as man is not allowed to kill another man on the ground of similarity and closeness, killing of animal by man should also come to an end. However such old habits, particularly dietary ones, die-hard. But like racialism, ill- treatment and, even worse, killing of animals, which some of the proponents of ethics call *specie-ism* should also come to an end. But we will have to face a long and bitter resistance and fight from conservative and vested interests.

The science of Neurology clearly brings out the existence of neurons, their networking and the feeling of pain among the animals. Thus from this angle, these other creatures are not different from man. Non- expression of pain in some cases of animals is no justification for their killing. On the other hand, even the life of man starts from a single cell that also does not have any neuron. But that cell develops into human beings that sense pain and pleasure. Therefore, it will be incorrect to think that living organism which do not have nerve cells do not experience the feeling of pain or hurt.

Science of Environment also enjoins that one should be acutely conscious of life in other animals, plants, other components of nature and microbes. Further there is strong factor of interde-pendence between living organism as well as a biotic part of the environment. The damaged caused to the environment leading to denudation of forests, global warming, drying up of glaciers, rivers, lakes and other water resources and pollution of air, water and land has already caused catastrophic effects on the existence of life on Earth.

Amazingly, the first formal and detailed declaration on environmental protection covering air, earth, water, fire, vegetation and other increasingly higher forms of life reaching up to the level of man, was made by Mahāvīra in his first set of discourses delivered more than 2550 years ago and embodied in *Ācārāṅga-sŧra*. There are seven sections in the first chapter of *Ācārāṅga-Sūtra*

dealing with the subject of environment only. Mahāvīra strongly pleads for recognition of life in air, earth, water, vegetation etc. and desires that one should be careful not to damage it. To give a flavor of what he said, it may be apposite to quote aphorisms 113 to 117 of *Ācārāṅga-Sūtra* as under:

"Comparison of plant life with Human life – 113

(a) This (i.e. human being) is born;	this (i.e. plant) too is born.
(b) This grows;	this too grows
(c) This possesses consciousness;	this too possesses consciousness
(d) On being cut this becomes sad; on being cut.	this too becomes sad (i.e. withers)
(e) This takes nourishment;	this too takes nourishment.
(f) This is mortal;	this too is mortal.
(g) This not eternal;	this too is not eternal.
(h) There is metabolism (anabolism;	there is metabolism in this too and catabolism) in this (i.e. building up of new cells and decaying of old cells);
(i) This undergoes various transformations (such as ageing etc.).	this too undergoes various Transformations (such as ageing etc.)

He who uses a weapon on the beings of vegetable body has neither comprehended nor forsworn actions (causing violence to the beings of vegetable body and other beings residing in the vegetable).114.

(On the contrary) he, who does not use any weapon on the beings of vegetable body, has comprehended and forsworn actions (causing violence to the beings of vegetable body, and other beings residing in it).115

Having discerned this, a sage should neither use weapon-causing violence to the beings of vegetable body, nor cause others to use it, nor approve of others using it. 116

He who discerns (i.e. comprehends and forswears) the actions that cause violence to the beings of vegetable – body, can be regarded as a (true) ascetic (for a true ascetic is he) who has discerningly forsworn actions". 117

Modern science discovered life or consciousness in plants life only about a hundred years ago, whereas Mahāvīra, without the aid of scientific instruments, could discern life in plants more than 2550 years ago. His teaching, if followed, will go long way in preserving the environment.

Ahiṃsā is also necessary for practical reasons. As mentioned earlier violence begets violence. Besides, violence does not solve problems in the long run. Further all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence. (*Parasparopagraho Jīvānām*)[10]

3.0 Application of Ahiṃsā

We may now consider the application of *Ahiṃsā* in day today life of common man. As already stated, normal life at individual, social, national and international level is rife with violence ranging from pretty one to horrendous levels. For the sake of mutual safety and comfort, social amity and international peace, action of various types, at different levels, may be necessary.

Undoubtedly one has to be seriously concerned about the weapons of mass destructions that might wipe out the entire life from our planet, or other grave forms of violence. But to concentrate exclusively on the larger issue of disarmament or other measures dealing with high dimensional violence is unlikely to lead to any real and meaningful change in the situation. Opinions on these aspects, though well meaning, may be high-sounding but hollow in terms of practicability and efficacy. Many of the movements for peace in the world, though needed, have at best been vapory. What is required is to focus on individual, however ordinary he might be. In fact, to obtain positive results, even though insignificant, one has to think of the application of *Ahiṃsā* in day-to-day life of common man.

The root cause of all violence is invariably to be sited in the mind of the smallest component of human society, an individual. It is at this level that proper education and ensuring action is required.

3.1 Ahiṃsā at Individual Level

Individuals would have to truly and sincerely practice *Ahiṃsā* in their daily life. With personal commitment to *Ahiṃsā* and personal transformation of individual, the real remedy to violence could be found. One of the major problems with many of the protest

groups, trying to fight against violence at national and international levels, is that personally they are not non-violent. One of the reasons why Gandhiji also could not succeed many a time was that a large number of his followers advocated non-violence at the social level but did not practice non-violence at the personal level.

Mahāvīra realized this during his time and stressed upon reformation of the individual and prescribed a detailed code of conduct of good and peaceful behavior. Mahatma Gandhi also emphasized it and made the individual mind as his focus of address and action. Even at the expense of repetition, it needs to be stated that the violence at the level of the nation-states or community is not a matter of unconcern but if we only talk of that and ignore *Ahiṃsā* at the individual level, we are unlikely to obtain positive results. There could be many practical and concrete steps to promote harmony peace and *Ahiṃsā*. Some of the suggestions in these regards are mentioned below.

As a primary step, human welfare projects should be planned at individual, social national or international levels. It does not matter if these projects are small. If they are bigger and serve larger number of people, the effort is equally welcome. The quality and intent of service is even more important. Such projects should first take care of the basic needs including those of water, food, housing, education and medicine. Generally when somebody is fed or given water or treated, his immediate response is one of happiness and gratitude. The spontaneous smile on his face is self-expressive and touching. A new type and level of communication is established between the giver and the receiver. It is a mutually satisfying experience. It is beneficial to the helper as to the receiver. It is, to use a modern cliché, a win-win situation. Negative thoughts and actions are dispelled. It is not for nothing that Mother Teresa was called the apostle of kindness and Calcutta (or now Kolkota) is named the City of Joy. This is the most effective method of bringing diverse individuals and groups together. Here, instead of indifference there is a concern. Hatred, if any, is replaced by harmony. And sadness is substituted with joy. This is the real alchemy of Ahimsa. If this idea is extended to the individuals of other faiths or countries, results are increasingly satisfying. Recently a free heart surgery of a resource-less girls from Pakistan in a well-known hospital in Bangalore in India generated an unusual

goodwill between the peoples of India and Pakistan, generally not considered to be the best of the friends. Many of the diplomatic moves could not match it.

Incidentally despite the efforts of some Jaina scholars and *ācāryas* beset with their own sectarian thinking, to deprive *Ahiṃsā* of its true positive meaning, Jainas in India and abroad do charity on a large scale. In India few can match them. They run several schools, hospitals orphanages, food and water distribution centers, animal sanctuaries etc. It is a case of heart getting the better of sterile and inhuman concepts, wrongly propounded by some of the sub-sects of Jainas.

One example of such compassion action is Bhagavān Mahāvīra Viklānga Sahāyatā Samiti (BMVSS), which was set up in 1975 to provide artificial limbs/calipers others aid and appliances to the handicapped. It is my privilege to be is founder and now its chief patron. BMVSS provides free artificial limbs to the amputees, calipers to the polio patients and others aids and appliances to the handicapped. By now BMVSS has provided over 8,00, 000 aids and appliances totally free of charge in last 30 years. It is the largest limb / caliper fitting organization in the world. For example in the financial years 2004-2005 BMVSS fitted over 17,000 handicapped with artificial limbs in a year. 90% of the patients of BMVSS are below the poverty line. Beneficiaries belong to different faiths and regions. They speak of Mahāvīra as the lord of compassion. BMVSS also held camps in 18 countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the impact is equally complimentary. For example Dawn, the leading newspaper of Pakistan and generally a critic of India, in its issue of 19th January 2002 said this for our third on –the –spot limb fitment camp at Kabul:

"As aid pours into Afghanistan, a special consignment from India is probably bringing more happiness to Kabul than the rest of the world's cargo combined ———. The consignment consists of thousand pieces of Jaipur – Foot ——. Along with the consignment went a team from BMVSS, a Jaipur charity that provide artificial legs for the poor."

In October 2003 BMVSS held a limb-fitment camp in the compound of the second largest mosque of Srinagar in Jammu & Kashmir where extremists are still active. The banners of BMVSS, which highlighted the words "Bhagavān Mahāvīra", were

displayed in the compound of the mosque. We were told that this was an unusual event. The naming of Hindu or Jaina Lord in mosque or Allah in a temple was unthinkable without sparking off communal riots in India. But we were welcome. Such is the soothing impact of compassion and *Ahiṃsā*. Similar is the response in other parts of the country and the world.

Mother Teresa personally visited our center and used to send all her amputees to us. One of her nuns, who had lost her leg, was provided with an artificial leg by us. We saw the same nun praying and kneeling before the cross in Mother Teresa home in Kolkota. The present Sisters of Charity Kolkota also sends her cases to us. We hold camps with Ramakrishna Mission, *Śaṁkarācārya āśrams* and others without any distinction. This kind of wide support again is the result of compassionate activity transcending all differences.

The compassionate projects small or big should also extend to animals. Compassion like peace is indivisible. One cannot be cruel to animals and compassionate to man. Once brutalization starts, its impact is not limited. The mechanized slaughterhouses, inhuman animal farms and other organized torture and killing need to be exposed so that individuals can make informed choices about their conduct and food. The industrial lobbies in these sectors however are reported to be so strong that even the media is virtually silent on these matters. Dietary habits are one's own choices but what is needed is transparency about the process. Besides on the positive side, the value of compassion towards animals needs to be inculcated among the younger generations. Compassion clubs and such other institutions need to be set up and encouraged. An extensive educational drive is needed.

3.2 Ahiṃsā at Interpersonal Level

Application of *Ahiṃsā* to inter-personal relationships is equally important. Because of ego, the other person's viewpoint is not appreciated and this becomes the origin of all conflicts. Additionally, earlier the rigidity in thought was often because of ignorance. Now we have a new phenomenon and the rigidity is, at times, on account of blind rationality.

Thought human knowledge is relative but, if people treat it as absolute, and make it the basis of *Anekānta*, has great relevance. This principle has many dimensions. It has seven-fold logic. It is a theory of relativity. It is a principle of ethics and human relationship.

Under this principle I may be right or wrong as much as the other person. The moment I recognize that I could be wrong from one perspective, may conduct can never be dogmatic or fundamentalist and my behavior is bound to be amicable. Some profound scholars have pointed out that the Semitic philosophies and cultures suffer from the concept of the excluded middle: things are either good or bad or white or black with no intermediate stages or gray colours. This may not be conducive to tolerance and hence may give birth to religious concept of *Ahiṃsā* and is also, in a way, partly subsumed by *Ahiṃsā*, permits thousands of flowers to bloom.

Keeping the above in view as also recognizing the equality of all souls, the cardinal core of *Ahiṃsā*, one has to be considerate to and appreciative of the views of other persons. In practical terms, at the level of individuals, what is needed is that lines of communications between man and man, husband and wife, parents and children, friends and foes must remain open. Further, the communication must be non-violent by being proper in its language and thoughtful in respecting the other person and his view. Those who have tried this know that this is the best way of conflict resolution.

The same principle applies to inter- faith relationships. If the leaders and followers of different religious starts knowing the other faiths and talking to their leaders and believers, things would be different. Most of the problems arise because people live in their religious cocoons. Dara Shukoh, the heir apparent of Shahajahan, the great Moghul who built Taj Mahal, was a great scholar. He was a liberal and tolerant person. In his book – *The Meeting of Oceans*, he observed that the day pundits i.e. Hindu priests and maulavis i.e. Muslim religious leaders, could sit together and talk, most of the differences between the followers of these two religions would not even arise. His further comment was more practical. He felt that the interested parties would however not let such meetings take place. With the present state of intolerance and terrorism, efforts have to be made for inter-faith dialogues to be conducted in non-violent, non accusive, non-dominant and in an appreciative language.

There is also a need for having greater interaction with the scholars and practiseners of Christianity, which is known for its concern for the poor and the service it renders to them.

3.3 Dos and Don'ts

Yet another way to achieve proper and harmonious conduct is to follow the basic principle of carefulness and restraint in thought, speech and conduct. For this Jainism has provided the concepts of *samiti* and *guptis.*

Samiti includes carefulness and caution in all activities and *guptis* include restrain in through and conduct. There has to be training and discipline for these so that they become the part of our second nature. For this, the modern psychological techniques could be used to instill these ideas not only in the individual's conscious mind that habit formation takes place. It is also particularly necessary that our response to any verbal comment or physical act must not be immediately reactive: it must be a paused and restrained one. The moment there is an intervening time element; the violent response may become muted. In short, *saňyama* (another expression for restrain) and *viveka* (discretion) should guide our thought and conduct.

The other pertinent and important idea is that of *Pratikramaṇa,* which is followed by devout Jainas. It means a daily critical self-appraisal and confession with the commitment to make an effort not to repeat the wrongs including violence towards man and other creatures. As is common, such practices tend to become mere formalities and rituals. But if *Pratikramaṇa* practiced in its true spirit, overtime, a person is likely to be considerate and non-violent in his daily life.

When we are talking of restraint, another primary principle of Jainism namely *Aparigraha* comes to the fore. At times violence at individual, social, national and international levels is rooted in greed and related economic causes.

While for laity, economic endeavor is inevitable and permitted; it has to be qualified by certain norms. In the first place undue possessiveness needs to be restrained and regulated. Mammon should not be allowed to become God. Secondly there must be the concept of sharing; call it giving, *tithe, zakāta, dāna* or *visarjana.* As the wise say, living is giving.

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6
Aparigraha and Social Welfare

Geeta Mehta

The Jaina code of conduct is the illuminating part of Jaina Philosophy, It is very easy to understand because it does not have any contradiction between the duties of an individual to herself/ himself and duties of an individual tc the society. The welfare of an individual is welfare to the society. The code of conduct of Jainas is such that by performing one's own duties, a person thinks of society and thus it leads to liberation.

Classical philosophers have considered conduct as the part of proper knowledge and wisdom –

सम्यग्दर्शन ज्ञान चारित्राणी मोक्षमार्ग:!

(*Samyak Darshan Jnana Charitryani Mokshamarah*)[1]

Therefore all moral codes are interwoven with *Dharma* (Religion) which upholds the society.

Jainism as well as Hinduism and Buddhism count for five *Mahavratas* which one should observe for harmony with body, society and cosmos. *Aparigraha* is one of them. It has much more importance according to Jainism, in the life of *Sravakas* as well as of *Sramanas*. *Sramanas* have to follow it as a Mahavrata to the most and *Sravakas* as *Anuvrata*, minimum rule.

Yogasastras says–

सर्वभावेषु मुच्छ्र्यास्त्याग स्यादपरिग्रहः।
यद सत्स्वपि जायेत मूच्छ्र्या चित विप्लव।।

(*Sarvabhaveshu muchharyastyaga syad aparigraha/*
Yad satsvpi jayet murchhaya chitta viplava//)[2]

The Vow of *Aparigraha* is the renouncing of all delusive interest in everything that exists not, since bewilderment of thought may arise from a delusive interest, even in a delusive interest even in the unreal.[3]

According to Jainism while practicing *Aaprigraha* one should not accumulate the things, should not allow other to accumulate the things, and should not permit to accumulate the things.

Aparigraha leads one to limiting or Restraining Desires (*iccha parimana*)

Aparigraha is defined in Jaina Agamas as *parigraha parimana;* that is limiting one's possessions. Material objects and services are limited, but consumers are too many. The desires too keep growing. As a solution to this problem, Lord Mahavira propounded the principle of limiting or restraining one's desires. Absence of individual ownership gives rise to conflicts; unlimited ownerships runs counter to the creation of a harmonious socio-political world order, so there is a middle way – limit your desires; limit individual ownership and acquisition, limit individual consumption.

The experiment in limiting desires is a challenge to the present economic competitiveness and a rat race of development. The experiment is difficult but in it alone lies the solution to the problem. The results of the lifestyle of limited desires are:

(a) Sharing, parting with a part of the resources one acquires;
(b) Building a healthy society.

Aparigraha for *Sravaks*

The five *Vratas* (*Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacarya* and *Aparigraha*) are considered from two points of view- (1) From the point of View of laity (*Sravakas*) (2) from the point of view of monks. (*Sramanas*). For the laity, the *Vratas* are to be practiced at moderate level and the monks have to practice them at rigid level.

Man cannot live without bread. Begging is a crime. Earning livelihood is the only way out. Therefore every head of the family resorts to it. The consciousness of the desires. He refrains from earning a living by dishonest means. He undertakes only such activities as do not tarnish either his character or that of society. The right means of livelihood involve:

(a) Clean business and integrity;
(b) Refraining from trade and business related to intoxicants, meat, fish, eggs and similar items undesirable for eating;
(c) Refraining from activities that involve smuggling;
(d) Refraining from trading in arms;
(e) Refraining from felling trees and destroying forests.

External *Parigraha*

क्षेत्र वास्तु हिरण्य सुवर्ण धन ध्यान्य दासी दास
कुप्य प्रमाणति कमः। तत्वार्थ सुत्र 729

(Kshetra vastu hiranya suvarna dhana dhanya dasee dasa kupya pramanti kramaha)[4]

There are nine external *parigraha*-necessities – for the *Sravaka*. Wealth, grain, farm, House, Gold, Silver, House hold items, Servants, Animals –Even these are to be limited. If we go on accumulating them we succumb to passions, greed, selfishness, ego and cruelty. One has to take vow to limit the accumulation of above mentioned things.

For the development of Aparigraha in society one should have the inclination towards tolerance and *Samanvaya*. Non-violence and non-possession are interconnected with each other. When one becomes violent and egoist, one feels like accumulating things and when one accumulates the things, it leads to develop violence. This is how the vicious circle of violence goes on.

Parigraha involves breaking of all five *Mahavratas* as Vinoba Bhave observes: If I preserve today what would be needed in the next twenty-five days, it will mean an accumulation made by committing theft affecting twenty five persons, and I shall be committing the sin of keeping them more or less hungry. At the same time, since there is not much accumulation with the creation, I shall have to resort to dubious methods. To accumulate that much will also put a strain on me and thereby lower my vitality. Moreover, I shall be worried about the safety of the accumulation, and it will make me secretive. Thus accumulation leads to the violation of the five vows of truth, non-violence, non-stealing, *Brahmacharya* and non-possession. Hence, there should be minimum acculation with the purpose of maintaining the physical body, and no accumulation at all of things not required for it. There should be constant efforts to make living increasingly simple by continuously bestowing thought on the question as to how requirements can be lessened in life.[5]

Internal *Parigraha*

The seeds of *Parigraha* are violence, lies, stealing, covetousness, attachment, jealousy,

मुच्छा परिग्रहो वुतो - Unawareness is *Parigraha*[6]

इच्छा परिग्रह: - Desire is *Parigraha*, Greed is *Parigraha*, Attachment is *Parigraha*, Sensuousness is *Parigraha*, ownership of other things is *Parigraha*. The result of *Parigraha* is a commitment of sins and it develops worldly cycle, it results in violence, it is the origin of anger, attachment, greed.

णत्थि एरिसो पासो पडिबंधो अत्थि सव्व जीवाणां सव्वलोए।

(*Natthi ariso paso padibandho atthi savvajeevanam savvaloe*)[7]

Jineswar has said, "There is no other greater bondage than *parigraha* in the whole world".

The Cause and the Result of the *Parigraha*

We go after *Parigraha* due to ignorance of who I am, i.e. Indiscrimination and ego. Discrimination and the discriminating knowledge of the attachment and the detachment and the daily Practice of Devotion will direct one to *Aparigraha*. Dedication and Determination helps one to be devoid of foibles of Possessiveness for the social upliftment.

अपरिग्रहे स्थैर्ये जन्मकथंतासंबोध:

(*Aparigrhe sthairye janmakathanta sambodhah*)[8]

In the stability in non-acquisition (the power flows of) understanding awakening of the law of births. The stickiest of the possessiveness, Parigraha is this body and selfness or longing for it. If complete non-possessiveness is stabilized in the yogin, he gets the corresponding power of knowing the mystery of this and other births.[9]

The Virtues of *Aparigrahi*

Aparigrahi is innocent, fearless (because he does not have anything to be stolen), develops equanimity, is non-violent, feels like helping others, gives up the feeling of mine, is satisfied in his *Atman* and develops friendship, joy, compassion and indifference with persons.

By limiting the possessions (*Parigraha*)

1. One becomes non-greedy and egoless.
2. One is contented and becomes compassionate and generous.
3. One does not resort to corruption and tax evasion.

4. One experiences bliss and happiness.
5. One pays enough to the servants to make them self-reliant.
6. One gives scholarships to the students so that they can advance in their studies.
7. One cooperates in the service of hospitals and veterinary colleges.
8. One gives relief to the patients with medicine, fruits etc.
9. One helps people with food, clothing and shelter.

By fulfilling this vow of *Aparigraha*, one is helpful to the society because

1. One does not take part in any immoral activity.
2. He controls the wastage of food and water both at home and in society.
3. He does not succumb to the unnecessary social expenses.
4. He does not succumb to throw away culture and utilizes every article unto its last.

Aparigraha develops dutifulness, self-control, friendship, compassion, patience, tolerance etc. Self – control, is very necessary in one's life, otherwise the life becomes directionless. Life without self-control is like horse without reins which may run amock.

हिंसानृतस्तेया ब्रह्म परिग्रहेभ्यो विरतिवृतम

(*Hinsanrutsteya brahma parigrahebhyoh virativrutam*)[10]

Aparigraha has an immense capacity to change one's life and through that of society. All 24 Tirthankars have left their wealth and Kingdoms to acquire higher Kingdom of self and *Nirvana* (Salvation).

An example of *Aparigrahi* in Modern Times

Swami Anand, a senior co-worker of Mahatma Gandhi has written in a chapter on 'Mara Pitrayo'-My Colleagues–where he narrates stories of Himalaya pilgrim "Once we were in the free-boarding house, a Sadavrata. A mendicant arrived and he ate only two chapattis. Somebody told him, "to have some flour for his evening meal, "He replied, "My dear, Sadhus never worry for the other meal"[11] . Gandhi Writes, "For me the dispossession has been a positive gain. I would like people to compete with me in my contentment. It is the richest treasure I own[12] .

Gandhi further says, "Possession implies provision for the future. A seeker after truth, a follower of the Law of love, cannot hold anything against tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow, he never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. If, therefore, we repose faith in his providence, we should rest assured that He will give us every day our daily bread, meaning everything that we require..

If each retained possession of only what he needed, no one would be in want, and all would live in contentment. As it is, the rich are discontented no less than the poor."[13]

I have read Tolstoy's "How Much Land a Man Needs" many times overÖ If Tolstoy had known much of cremation, he would even have allowed much less space and, if the body were to receive scientific treatment of reduction, it would be resolved into the five elements and then no space at all would be required. And that is precisely what our mental state should be. In practice we will always fall short of the theory. But any little possession we may keep would then be irksome. We would recognize it as our limitation and not as our right. And, if suddenly we are deprived of it, we should feel as if so much burden was taken of ours is taken away".[14]

Aparigraha in Wider Sense

Aparigraha can be interpreted in multifaceted ways-while performing three obligations – preserving nature, (*yajna*) conserving energy and thus maintaining cosmic balance, giving to others (*dana*) and thus maintaining social balance, living austerity (*Tapas*) and thus maintaining bodily balance

सर्व मंगल मांल्यम सर्वकल्याणकारकम।
प्रधानम सर्वगुणानाम अपरिग्रह शासनम।।

Sarva mangal mangalyam sarvakalyankarakam/
Pradhanam sarvagunanama Aparigraha sasanam//

Aparigraha directs us to 'simple living and high thinking. '*Aparigraha* leads one to the life style which is *Satyam* (Truthful), Shivam (brings about all round-welfare) and *Sundaram* (beautiful) by observing *Aparigraha* one is led to a progressive simplification of one's own life.

Perfect fulfillment of the ideal of non-possession requires that man should live like the birds, have no roof over his head, no

clothing and no stock of food for the morrow. He will indeed need his daily bread, but it will be God's business, and not his to provide it, only very few can reach this ideal.

Aparigraha leads to Giving up (*Dana*)

If one wants to keep away from possession, one has to give *Dana*. *Dana* brings about social balance, if you have more in excess, practice charity. Kabir has said,

पानी बाढे नांबमें घरमैं बाढै दाम।
दोनों हाथ उलेचिये यही सज्जन को काम।।

Pani badhe navamen gharmen badhai dama/
Donon hatha ulechiye yahi sajjanako kama//

(If water spills into the boat, and wealth is amassed at home,
With both your hands do throw them out., Wise men do the same) *Dand* preaches that live in such a manner that others can live better. It is said in ordinary language. Jo Deta hai vaha dev, Aur jo Rakhata Hai vah Rakshasa. (one who gives is a God, One who keeps is a demon).

Aparigraha and *Ahimsa*

Aparigraha and *Ahimsa* may be said to be the two sides of the same coin. Both together lead us to social welfare and world-peace. The results of a non-violent and non-possessive lifestyle are:

(a) The development of sensitivity;
(b) Control of ecological pollution;
(c) Continual growth of friendship with living beings.

The attitude of *Aparigrahi* is that of protecting each other, enjoying the things together, endeavouring together, not envying other, becoming radiant together thus leading to social welfare and peace.

सहनावावतु सहनौभुनक्तु सहवीर्य करवावहे।
तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विव्दिषावहे
ॐ शांति शांति शांति —

Sahanavavtu sahanaubhunaktu sahaviryam karavava hai/
Tejaswinavadhitamastu ma vividvisava hai//
Om Santih Santih Santih/ (*Kathopanishad, Shanti Mantra*)

The conflicts between individual and society, society and

nation, between the nation and another nation arise from selfishness. Non-possession develops selfless attitude निस्वार्थ वृति in one's mind. The non-possessive person develops compassion, co-operation, co-existance, contentement and tolerance. Non-possession and non-violence together in practice as well as *anekantavada* in thinking will bring world peace.

"Truth and non-violence and re basic, but in the economic field they can only find expression in non-stealing and non-possession. Economic matters play a very big role in life and the science of morality cannot be indifferent to it on the contrary, it is the responsibility of ethics to regulate and control it".[15]

Aparigraha and Social Welfare

Aparigraha helps society in the removal of poverty, expoitation and slavery. It sustains and strengthens the society and keeps it peaceful. It is the milestone for happy society and the missile for world Peace. An Aparigrahi serves the society indirectly. An Aparigrahi thinks of the needs of others and thus develops Atmaupamyata (identity with others) which leads to liberation.

The modern example of that is Mahatma Gandhi. When Gandhi was offered a shirt by an English child during this visit to England for Round Table conference, He said, 'Give me millions of shirts to mitigate the suggesting and poverty of all my brethren. Thus one develops social consciousness which could the way to perfection.

One develops the tendency of oneness of being (aatmavat Sarvabhutesu). His inclination is not towards live and let live but live in such a manner so that others can survive i.e. live for others. It makes one aware of duties rather than rights. If everyone practices *Aparigraha* how pure and peaceful our world be! In the contemporary context of globalization, the applied theory of *Aparigraha* can work as a good interventionists and ecological measure to retain the balance between man and nature. The farsighted Gandhi realized its value both in strategic and spiritual terms. Mahatma Gandhi writes, "If we follow the vow of *Aparigraha*, there will be real everlasting peace because it will be peace through justice and not superficial peace. This will be the foundation of Universal brotherhood".

The principle of live and let live also falls short of his stature. The only test of the fitness of man to survive is, therefore, in his

letting others to live or making the unfit to survive. The peaceful co-existence of which there is so much talk in the political circles all over the world would become meaningless if it is based only on the principle of live and let live. Live and let live is the negative aspect of co-existence.

The real, the positive and the peaceful co-existence has to be on the pattern of the co-existence of a mother and her newly born child lying on the same bed. Just imagine what would happen to the child and also to the mother ultimately if they decide to co-exist simply on the principle of "live and let live". When the child cries, in spite of all her personal ailments and discomforts the mother pats and feeds the child. She does not say, well! My child, you live where you are and let me live where I am. The mother and the child co-exist only because the mother takes over the responsibility to make otherwise 'unfit' child to survive. The peaceful co-existence between man and man and also between nation and nation is possible only on the principle of "making the unfit to survive".[16]

There can't be peace and happiness in society without feelings of welfare and economic equality among the nations. Today 47% people get only 5% of resources of the world. If there is no change in this condition, there will be stress and conflict among the people.

A truly non-possessive person can adjust to any circumstances. He surrenders all his possessions to the society and society also surrenders all its possession to him hence he becomes the richest.

Thus, if we show some awareness we can preserve the energy of our body and mind from remembering the accumulations of things, society by sharing things and cosmos by preserving the nature. If *Aparigraha* is practiced with awareness then all, the whole world be happy and healthy. The prayer of the Upanisadic sages as

सर्वेऽत्र सुखिन सन्तु निरामयाः।
सर्वे भद्राणि पृयन्तु मा कश्चिद दुःखमाप्नुयात।।

Sarvetra sukhinah santu sarve santu niramayaha/
Sarve Bhadrani pasyantu ma kascid dukhamapunyat//

***Aparigrahi* Society**

For Sarvodaya Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave aimed to create Society founded on *Aparigraha* But their *Aparigrahi* society is not

an impoverished society. On the contrary Vinoba elaborated, "I desire to make *Asangrahi* society where there would be enough food grains for atleast two years. It shall be the right of a hungry man to approach to any house and ask for food. There should be enough food in every house Let there be accumulation but it should be evenly distributed in every home. *Aparigraha* in society means possession according to the needs, none will accumulate unnecessarily, it should be according to the needs. "Each according to one's capacity to each according to one's need".

Vinoba counts five features of a non-possessive society:

(1) There will be an abundance of wealth,
(2) The wealth will be equally distributed among the members of the society,
(3) There will be no accumulation of such rubbish as liquor an cigarettes,
(4) There will be accumulation of certain things on priority basis, the order being food grains, cloth, housing, agricultural implements, means of knowledge, means of recreation and so on, and
(5) There will be minimum accumulation of money.[17]

If theft is regarded as a crime, accumulation of property and inequality also must be regarded as sinful, whereas at present one is punished and the other is praised.[18] We have long known that non-possession brings about individual purification. We have now to realize that it can also serve as a powerful means of social well-being. We have to prove that it is not only spiritually efficacious, but it can also helps us in constructing a richer and better worldly life.[19]

Aparigraha and Ecology

There is no scarcity of things in the world but out of greed we go on accumulating things. In this context I am reminded of Mahatma Gandhi's prophetic vision "there is enough for every body's need but not for anybody's greed". Gandhi used to go to Sabarmati River with a glass and would take the water in a glass and come to the bank of the river to wash his face and hands; somebody asked him, "Where the Whole River is flowing here, why do you take the glass to use water?" Gandhi said, "I need only a glassful of water to wash my face and hands. Why should I pollute

whole river which is meant for the birds, beasts and other human beings also", His every action suggested that he was a practicing environmentalist, long before environmental protection became fashionable in the West and elsewhere. Loard Mahavir has also preached to be careful about apkaya Jiva (life in water bodies beings).

Life styles need to be adjusted to seek more harmonious ecological goals. The stress on over-consumption and extensive use of natural resources in the developed countries needs to be examined in order to meet the inner harmony with nature. Lord

Conclusion: *Aparigraha* as an Ideal!

All cannot be *Aparigrahi* like monks but we can limit our luxuries and lower down our attachment. After getting all material achievements a man may not be happy but monks give up all material achievements and they are happy.

Civilized behaviour/conduct, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment, and increases the capacity for service.[20] It further says, "Love and exclusive possession can never go together. Theoretically, where there is perfect love, there must be perfect non-possession. The body is our last possession. So a man can only exercise perfect love and be completely dispossessed if he is prepared to embrace death and renounce his body for the sake of human service.[21]

Aparigraha is an ideal condition. It can be said that an ideal is never realized perfectly. But we should not lower our ideal on this account. No one has ever been able to draw the ideal straight line of Geometry but we may not, for that reason, change its defrinition. If we draw a straight line, keeping the ideal one in our view, we shall succeed in drawing a line a boat without the rudder. Keeping this in mind, we should sincerely try to realize the ideal of *Aparigraha* as best as we can.[22] It has been truly said that desire for enjoyment creates bodies for the sould and sustains them. When this desire vanishes, there remains no further need for the body and man is free from the vicious cycle of births and deaths.

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7

Aspects of Contemporary Jain Demography

Prakash C. Jain

The Historical evolution of Jainism as a sotereological religion and that of its followers as a major trading community is directly responsible for its contemporary population dynamics and predicaments. In order words, the emphasis on *ahimsa* and other ethical values enshrined in Jainism led to Jains historical evolution as a trading community which in turn led them to emerge as a relatively affluent community. This affluence is directly associated with the "low fertility rate" among the Jain women. Taking the 1991 and 2001 census reports into consideration, the article mainly focuses on the Jain demography of the last quarter of the 20th century.

It is often maintained by a number of Jain scholars that during and 300 years after the nirvana of Lord Mahavir (599-527 B.C) the Jain population was in the vicinity of about 40 crore or 400 million. These scholars further maintain that the Jain Population was reduced to about 160 million during the 6th or 7th century A.D., and to about 85 million by 12th Century. The Jain population further declined to about 30 million by the 15th Century A.D. Obviously, royal patronage during the ancient and medieval period played a major role in the overall growth or decline of the Jain population in India. Besides, royal patronage, persecution and/or conversion of the followers of Jainism to Hinduism and Islam had also been a factor in the decline of Jains population during certain periods of Indian History. At the same time, Jainism is not a proselytizing religion, although in principle it is open to all, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Small experiments of proselytizing here and there eventually failed and could not gain momentum. One can recall here the conversion of *Bhangis* (sweepers) in Udaipur by Acharys Tulsi during the 1980s (See Syamlal 1992).

According to one historian, since the beginning of the medieval period (*circa* 12th century) till the first quarter of the present (twentieth) century, the community had been continuously losing in numbers, so that which had been once a major religious group on the sub-continent was reduced to a small minority. Most of the Brahmana, Kshatriya (Rajput), Kayastha and Sudra followers became converts to other faiths under the influence of Christian missions, Muslim Tabligh, the Arya Samaj movement, or the Vaisnava, Virasaiva and other sectarian preachers" (Jain, J.P. 1983: 30-31).

Whatever might have been the numerical strength of the followers of Jainism in the past, presently they add up to less than five million souls the world over. Nevertheless, this figure represents the largest Jain population in modern times. The smallest population of the Jains in India with about 1,117,000 persons was recorded in 1921 census. Even if we add the then population of overseas Jains, the figure would hardly exceed the 1,150,000 mark.

This chapter analyses the major population characteristics of the Jains as per the 1991 and 2001 censuses of India. The 2001 census data are derived from *Census of India 2001: The First Report of Religion Data* (2004). The 1991 census data are based on the *C-9 Religion Table* which gives data for persons, males and females separately for each of the six major religious communities, viz., Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains and combined figures for "other religions and persuasions" and "religion not stated" by total, rural and urban for India, states and union territories. The 1991 and 2001 census tables correspond to Table C-VII-Religion of 1961, 1971 and Table HH-15 of 1981, the only difference being that the figures of religion for 1961, 1971, 1991 and 2001 were based on the religion of the individual whereas the figures presented in 1981 were based on religion of head of the household.

Population Size

Jains are one of the oldest indigenous religious communities of India. During certain periods of ancient and medieval history, a number of kings and other ruling elites as well as large sections of the population were Jains, in modern times the Jains have been a minority community in India (Jain, M.K. 1981; Sharma 1976). Exactly how small has been the Jain community in recent times

was not known until 1881 when the first systematic census of Indian population was undertaken. In 1881 the total Jain population was enumerated at 1,221,896 or 0.48 percent of the total Indian population. Since then the Jains have seldom constituted more than half-a percent of the total population of India (See Table 7.1). With the enumeration of 4.2 million (0.4%) Jains in the 2001 census of India they still constitute the smallest religious community in the country. The corresponding figures for other religious communities are: Hindus 827 million (81.4%), Muslims 138 million (12.4%), Christians 24 million (2.3%), Sikhs 19 million (1.9%), Buddhists 7.9 million (0.8%), other religious communities 6.6 million (0.7%).

In the 1991 census, Hindus were enumerated as the largest religious community (82%) followed by Muslims (12.12%), Christians (2.34%), Sikhs (1.94%), Buddhists (0.76%) and Jains (0.4%). As can be seen in Table 2, the religious composition of the Indian society in the census year 2001 continued to remain more or less the same with minor variations. The average decadal growth rate was found to be 21.5%. Against this only Hindus (20.0%) and Sikhs (16.9%) showed less than average growth rate during 1991-2001, whereas Muslims (29.3%), Christians (22.1%), Buddhists (23.2%) and Jains (26.0%) grew at higher than average rate. Other important religious communities enumerated in the 1991 census were Jews (5,271), Zorostrians (76,382) and Bahai's (5,575). About a quarter of a million people were listed as unclassified. In the 2001 census only 69,601 (33,949 males and 35,652 females) Parsis/ Zorostrians were enumerated.

Population Growth Rate

During the decade 1881-1891 Jain population did increase by about 16% but went on declining in the 1901, 1911 and 1921 censuses. The 1891 level of the Jain population was restored only in 1941. Since then until 1981 the Jain population had been increasing continuously at varying rates ranging from 12% to over 28% per decade. Between 1981 and 1991 the Jain population grew by only 141, 065 persons, or by 4.42%. This was one of the lowest decadal growth rates in the Jain population since 1921. This is also the most striking feature of the 1991 census of India with respect of the Jain population.

The slow growth in Jain population can be attributed to the decline in fertility rate due to affluence among the Jains and their

upper middle class status. When most demographers were expecting less than 4% population growth rate of Jains in the 2001 census, they were surprised to discover that it turned out to be over 26% during the decade 1991-2001. This time around "ethnic revivalism" is considered to be the main cause of population growth among the Jains. According to the Indian Census officials, the "respondents were allowed to look at the information collected from them by enumerators and sign the forms after verifying that they were to their satisfaction in 2001 census. This was the first time this procedure was followed. Earlier, many of the enumerators might have recorded Jains as Hindus. But with the respondents verifying and signing the form, they would have insisted on being registered as separate, as Jains and not Hindus. This could be one of the reasons for the jump in Jain growth figures" (Nagarajan 2004).

However the birth rate still continues to be low among the Jains. Thus the proportion of child population (0-6 age group) among the Jains was found to be only 10.6%, which the Commissioner's report of the 2001 census attributed to "low fertility" in the community. Comparative figures for Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and Buddhists were 15.9%, 15.6%, 13.5%, 12.8% and 14.4% respectively (Table 7.2). The total fertility rate (TFR) among the Jains was estimated to be 1.8 for the year 1998-99 as against the national average of 2.7.

Population Variation by States/Union Territories

Table 7.3 presents data regarding distribution of Jain population by States and Union Territories for five consecutive census years since 1961. The variation in Jain population across the states and union territories has not obviously been uniform. Data in this table clearly suggest that as per the 1991 census data, in 14 States and five union territories there was varying increase in Jain population over the 1981 figures. These states and union territories are: Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh, Andman & Nicobar, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Delhi, and Pondicherry. In the 2001 census, however, all the states and union territories showed varying percentage of increase in the Jain population. No Jains were reported in Lakshadweep in any census year. There was no census taking in Assam in 1981 and in Jammu and Kashmir in 1991.

As per 1991 census, in nine States and one Union Territory Jain population varyingly had declined during the decade 1981-1991. These States and the Union Territory along with percent decrease in population are listed as follows: Bihar (-16.53), Haryana (-0.52), Meghalaya (-17.90), Mizoram (-63.64), Orissa (-5.12), Punjab (-23.24), Rajasthan (-9.85), Sikkim (-62.96), West Bengal (-11.14), Chandigarh (-18.95). It is remarkable, however, that no decline of Jain population was registered in any state and union territory in India between 1991 and 2001. It must be pointed out here that during the 1990s there was a vigorous campaign in the Jain ethnic media to the effect that during the census enumerations they should return themselves as "Jains" and not "Hindus". The media still continues to exhort them to write their surnames as "Jain" in addition to, or in place of using caste, sub-caste, clan or family names.

If by some definition or devise India could be divided into Eastern and Western halves then it can very well be established that at least 90% of total Jain population lives in Western half of the country and only less than 10% in the Eastern half. Incidentally as per 1991 census figures, in the seven North-Eastern States only about 24,000 Jains were enumerated. Of these over 20,000 lived in Assam alone. The corresponding figures for the census year 2001 were about 29,000 and 24,000 respectively.

Among the union territories the largest number of Jains lived in Delhi: about 74,000 in 1981, a little over 94,600 in 1991 and 155,122 in 2001. In other Union Territories, Chandigarh had 1,531 Jains in 1991 followed by Dadra and Nagar Haveli (529), Pondicherry (470), Daman and Diu (212) and Andaman and Nicobar (17). Corresponding figures for the census year 2001 for Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Pondicherry, Daman and Diu and Andaman & Nicobar were 2,592; 864; 952; 268 and 23. No Jains were reported in Lakshadweep in any census year since 1951 (Table 7.3).

Concentration in Seven States/Union Territories

Table 7.4 presents data about variations in the number and percentage of Jains and decadal percent population change among them in seven major States/Union Territories, namely Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharastra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. In 1951 Gujarat had the largest number of Jains followed

by Rajasthan and Maharashtra. In 1961 however Maharastra became the number one State to have the largest number of Jains, followed by Gujarat and then Rajasthan. Since then Maharastra has been continuing to have this distinction with ever increasing concentration of the Jain population within its boundaries. Thus in the 1991 census report there were 965,840 Jains in Maharastra followed by 562,806 in Rajasthan and 491,331 in Gujarat. The corresponding figures in the 2001 census were: Maharashtra 1,301,843, Rajasthan 650,491, and Gujarat 525,305. Meanwhile in the 2001 census Madhya Pradesh with 545,446 Jains emerged as the state supporting the third largest Jain population after Maharashtra and Rajasthan. These four States, together with Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi accounted for about 90% of the total Jain population in India in 2001. The varying pace of population growth can be attributed mainly to inter-state migration, ethnic revivalism and natural increase.

Urbanisation

A highly significant population characteristic of the Jains in India is their high degree of urbanization. This has been so since the very beginning of the 20th century. As early as in the 1901 census about 30.0% of the jain population was living in urban areas that declined slightly to 29.6% in 1911, but continued to rise since 1921 (33.9%) to reach a figure no 59.8% in 1971 and 75.0% in 2001. Thus as per 2001 census 3,215,706 lived in urban areas, whereas only 1,009,347 lived in rural areas. Thus today Jains are the most urbanized religious community in India (see table 7.1).

Sex Ratio

Table 7.1 presents data regarding sex-ratio among the Jain population which reveal a clear deficiency of females during the 20th century. The sex-ratio in the Jain population ranges from 924 in 1961 to 946 in 1991, and averages to about 935 for the 20th century. The 1991 census data reveal that of the 3,352,706 Jains, 1,722,715 were males and 1,629,991 females. The sex ratio (females per 1,000 males) thus comes to 946 which suggest a slight improvement over that for the census year 1981 that is 941. The sex ratio among the Jains was thus found to be better *vis-á-vis* Hindus (925), Muslims (930) and Sikhs (888) but worse than that among the Christians (994) and Buddhists (952). Unfortunately, this gain was wiped out in the 2001 census in which case there were only 2,047,655 females

for 2,177,398 males. Thus the sex ratio among the Jains in 2001 declined to only 940. "Among the major states Kerala has returned the highest sex ratio of 996 for Jains. In Gujarat and Rajasthan also sex ratio of Jains is high at 969 and 966 respectively. In twenty states Jain population has sex ratio between 901 and 950" (*The First Report on Religion Data* 2004: xviii).

Even more alarming aspect of sex ratio among the Jains is the sharp decline of sex ratio in the 0-6 age group which is only 870 compared to 927 for all religious communities in India, 925 for Hindus and 950 for Muslims. In terms of state-wise distribution, sixteen states and union territories had a child sex ratio below 850 among the Jains (*The First Report on Religion Data* 2004: xviii). Among the major states having large Jain population sex ratio in the age group 0-6 is low at 832 in Gujarat, 878 in Rajasthan and 906 in Madhya Pradesh (Table 7.6).

On another measure, that is, the proportion of child population in the age group 0-6 years to the total population, the Jains are again lagging behind all other religious communities in India (Table 7.2). Thus Jains had the lowest proportion of child population (10.6%) compared with the national average (15.9%), Hindus (15.6%), Muslims (18.7%), Christians (13.5%), Sikhs (12.8%) and Buddhists (14.4%). "The proportion of population in the age group 0-6 among the Jains reveals that among the major states Karnataka accounts for highest proportion of 12 percent which is far below the national average. Gujarat has the lowest proportion of 9.2 percent. Low fertility trend among the Jains is evident from the fact that except two states all other states have child population proportion below 14 percent. Jains have reported the lowest child population 9.2 percent in Gujarat followed by West Bengal (9.6%) among the major states" (*The First Report on Religion Data* 2004: xx).

In the absence of any study on the subject the causes of declining sex ratio among the Jains are not easy to find. Apparently the prevalence of female foeticide could be one factor in this regard. Female child *diksha* and discouragement of widow remarriage in the community could also be the contributing factors (See Sangave 1980: 29-30). Needless to say, this decline in sex ratio has begun to give rise to a number of marital and social problems among the Jains that in turn have been contributing factors in lowering the sex ratio – a vicious circle indeed.

Literacy, Work Participation and Occupation

Literacy-wise, in 2001 Jains with a figure of 94.1% were the most literate community, followed by Christians at 80.3%, Buddhists 72.7%, Sikhs 69.4%, Hindus 65.1% and Muslims 59.1% (Table 7.7). It must be noted that in as many as 29 states of India the literacy rate among the Jains is above 90%. The national average for literacy is 64.8%. In all the religious communities female literacy was found to be lower than the male literacy by about 11 percentage points. It stood at 53.7%. In female literacy too, the Jains take the lead with a figure of 90.6%, followed by Christians (76.2%), Sikhs (63.1%), Buddhists (61.7%), Hindus 53.2% and Muslims (50.1%). In twenty-nine states and union territories the female literacy among the Jains is 80% or above (Table 9). According to the report of the Registrar-General and Census Commissioner of India, the Jains are likely to reach the goal of universal literacy for the total population any time now" (*The First report on Religion data* 2004: xxi).

Along with the highest literacy rate the work participation rate (WPR) or percentage of workers to total population is also highest among the Jain males (55.2%) followed by Sikhs (53.3%) and Hindus (52.4%); the WPR for all religious communities being 39.1 percent in the 2001 census (Table 7.7). The lowest WPR for the male population is found among the Muslim males (47.5%). In spite of the highest literacy rate among the Jain females however their WPR in 2001 census was the lowest (9.2%) preceded by Muslims (14.1%) and Hindus (27.5%). This suggests that gender gap in regard to WPR is extremely sharp among the Jains. Apparently lots of talent among the Jain women is not being properly utilized. It is likely that most Jain women spend their time either in performing religious activities or in doing household chores. It is also very likely that they do not feel the need for economic employment given the fact that the Jains are economically a better off community. But these are only just hypotheses. These require sociological validation through fieldwork in different parts of India.

In terms of the four broad work participation categories, namely, cultivators, agricultural labourers, household industry workers and other workers (this last category includes workers in tertiary sector, such as service, manufacturing, trade and commerce and allied activities) the distribution of Jain population was heavily skewed in favour of the "Others". Only 11.7% of the Jain population

was engaged as cultivators, 3.3% as agricultural labourers, and less than 3.0% as household industry workers (Table 7.8). Thus the business character of the Jain community is evident from the 2001 census data. But again, systematic sociological studies are needed to ascertain the precise nature of the economic and occupational status of the Jain community in India.

Conclusion

The Jains have always been a minority community in India in modern times. Since the 1881 census the Jains seldom constituted more than half a percent of the total population of India. The current population of Jains is estimated around 5.0 million. They are heavily concentrated in the western half of India, particularly Maharastra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. About 250,000 Jains are in diaspora, mainly in North America, the U.K and East Africa. Close to 75% of Jains live in urban areas. Other demographic features include very high level of literacy, the lowest infant mortality rate and the medium level of sex ratio (940 in 2001 compared to 931 for Hindus and 950 for Muslims. During the 1981-1991 decade, the Jain population had increased very slowly, that is, at the rate of only 4.42% compared to 23.17% for the previous decade. This firmly confirmed the urban middle class character of the community.

Two major demographic challenges that the Jain community in India is facing today are the very low rate of population growth and the declining sex ratio not only among the adults but also among the younger generation. Both these trends are quite evident from the data available from the 1991 and 2001 census reports. Although due to ethnic revivalism the decadal growth rate of the Jain population during the 1991-2001 decade has jumped to 26.0 per cent, in all probability it will come down to around 4.0 per cent by the next census date in 2011. The sex ratio among the Jains is also likely to further drop slightly by that time.

During the first quarter of the 20th Century when the Jain populations registered a continuous decline and the total population numbered only 1.1 million in 1921 census, some Jain scholars expressed concern about the "extinction" of the Jain community, which as we now know was not a realistic assessment of the situation. Today with about 5.0 million Jains in India the community is truly at the cross road. And if the demographic trends

within the Jain community continue to operate as they have been for the past few decades, the extinction might be a distinct possibility in a couple of centuries.

Table 7.1: Variations in the number of Jains since 1891

Census	Number of Janins (in 000s)	Percentage of total population	Decadal percent change in the number of jains	Unbaniza-tion	Sex Ratio
1881	1,222	0.49	–	–	–
1891	1,417	0.51	15.94	–	–
1901	1,334	0.47	-5.83	30.0	929
1911	1,248	0.41	-6.47	29.6	940
1921	1,177	0.39	-5.26	33.9	931
1931	1,251	0.37	6.28	34.6	940
1941	1,440	0.37	15.81	41.4	930
1951	1,618	0.45	11.67	–	927
1961	2,027	0.46	25.17	53.9	924
1971	2,605	0.47	28.48	59.8	940
1981*	3,193	0.48	23.17	64.0	941
1991**	3,352	0.40	4.42	71.0	946
2001	4,225	0.40	26.0	75.0	940

* Excluding Assam where, census was not held in 1981 owing to disturbed conditions.

** Excluding Jammu & Kashmir where 1991 census was not held.

Sources

1. Kingsley Davis, *Population of India & Pakistan*, Russell & Russell, New York, 1951, pp. 178-179
2. Census of India, 1961, Paper No. 1 of 1963, Religion, R.G. Office, New Delhi, 1963, pp. ii-viii.
3. Census of Indian, 1971, Paper No. 2 of 1972, Religion, R. G. Office, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 2-5.
4. Census of India, 1981, Paper No. 4 of 1984, Household Population by Religion of Head of Household, R.G, Office, New Delhi, 1984, p. 26 (figures amended as per Errata issued subsequently by this office).

5. Census of India, 1991, Paper No, 1 of 1995, Religion, R.G. Office, New Delhi, 1995.
6. Census of India 2001, First Report of Religion Data. R.G. Office, New Delhi, 2004.

Table 7.2: Demographic Indicators of the six Major Religious Communities of India, 2001

Religious Communities	% of total population	Population growth (1981-1991*)	Population growth (1991-2000)	Sex ratio	Sex ratio (0-6)	Proportion of child population in Age group (0-6)	Infant morality
Hindus	81.4	22.78	20.0	931	925	15.6	77
Muslims	12.4	32.76	29.3	936	950	18.7	69
Christians	2.3	16.89	22.1	1009	964	13.5	49
Sikhs	1.9	25.48	16.9	893	780	12.8	53
Buddhists	0.8	35.98	23.2	953	942	14.4	54
Jains	0.4	4.42	26.0	940	870	10.6	47
Others	0.7	NA	111.3	992	976	18.0	80
Total/ Average	**100.0**	**23.05**	**21.5**	**933**	**927**	**15.9**	**61.3**

* Excludes figures of Assam and Jammu & Kashmir.

Source:

1. Census of India, 2001.
2. Infant mortality data are based on National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2), 1998-99, Indian Express, Delhi, November 18, 2001.

Table 7.3: Total population-Jains, 1961-2001
(India, States and Union territories)

India/ States/ Union territories	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
India	2,027281	2,604,646	3,206,038	3,352,706	4,225,053
Jammu & Kashmir	1,427	1,150	1,576	*	2,518
Himachal Pradesh	95	626	1,046	1,206	1,408
Punjab	48,754	21,383	27,049	20,763	39,276
Chandi-garh	**	1,016	1,889	1,531	2,592
Uttaran-chal	$	$	$	7,870	9,294
Haryana	**	31,173	35,482	35,296	57,167
Delhi	29,595	50,513	73,917	94,672	155,122
Rajasthan	409,417	513,548	624,317	562,806	650,493
Uttar Pradesh	122,108	124,728	141,549	168,389	207,111
Bihar	17,598	25,185	27,613	11,332	16,085
Sikkim	19	–	108	40	183
Arunachal Pradesh	14	39	42	64	216
Nagaland	263	627	1,153	1,202	2,093
Manipur	778	1,408	975	1,337	1,461
Mizoram	***	–	11	4	179
Tripura	195	375	297	301	477
Meghalaya	***	268	542	445	772
Assam	9,468	12,917	*	20,645	23,957
West Bengal	26,940	32,203	38,663	34,355	55,223
Jharkhand	$$$	$$$	$$$	11,717	16,301
Orissa	2,295	6,521	6,642	6,302	9,154
Chhattis-garh	$$	$$	$$	43,213	56,103
Madhya Pradesh	247,927	345,211	444,960	447,111	545,446

India/ States/ Union territories	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Gujarat	409,754	451,578	467,768	491,331	525,305
Daman & Diu	+	223	140	212	268
Dadra & N.Haveli	120	303	372	529	864
Maharash-tra	485,672	703,664	939,392	965,840	1,301,843
Andhra Pradesh	9,012	16,108	18,642	26,564	41,846
Karnataka	174,366	218,862	297,974	326,114	412,659
Goa	68	333	462	487	820
Laksha-dweep	–	–	–	–	–
Kerala	2,967	3,336	3,605	3,641	4,528
Tamil Nadu	28,350	41,097	49,564	66,900	83,359
Pondi-cherry	76	237	277	470	952
Andn & Nicobar Is.	3	14	11	17	23

Notes:

1. The Census 2001 Population figures for India and Manipur exclude those of Mao Maram, Paomata and Pural sub- divisions of Senapati district of Manipur.
2. In 1991 figures for Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have been recasted as per the Jurisdiction in 2001 census.
3. All religious communities include 'Religion not stated'.
4. Population figures for 1961 are as per 'Social and Culture Tables' part-II-C (i), Census of India 1971, 1981 as per 'Religion'- Paper 2 of 1972, Census of India 1971, 1981 as per 'Household population by religion of head of household'-paper 4 of 1984, Census of India 1981 and 1991 as per 'Religion' –Part IV – B (ii) Census of India 1991

* No Census conducted, ** Included under Punjab, ***Included under Assam, $- Included under Uttar Pradesh, $$-Included under

Madhya Pradesh $$$- Included under Bihar, +- Included under Goa. ++- India figures for 1971 excludes population of Sikkim that is 209, 843 as per 'Household population by Religion of Head of the Household, Paper 3 of 1985, Series 19, Sikkim.

Table 7.4: Variations in the Number and Percentage of Jains and Decadal Percent Population Change in Seven major States since 1961

State / Number of Jains	**1961**	**1971**	**1981**	**1991**	**2001**
Maharashtra	485,672	703,664	939,392	965,840	1,301,843
Rajasthan	409,417	513,548	624,317	562,806	650,493
M.P	247,927	345,211	444,960	490,324	545,446
Gujarat	409,754	451,578	467,508	491,331	525,305
Karnataka	174,366	218,862	284,508	326,114	412,659
UP	122,108	124,728	141,549	176,259	207,111
Delhi	29,595	50,513	73,917	94,672	155,122
Percentage of total No. of Jains	**1961**	**1971**	**1981**	**1991**	**2001**
Maharashtra	23.96	27.02	29.42	28.98	30.81
Rajasthan	20.22	19.72	19.56	16.89	15.39
M.P	12.23	13.25	13.94	13.35	12.91
Gujarat	20.21	17.34	14.65	14.75	12.43
Karnataka	8.60	8.40	8.91	9.79	9.76
UP	6.02	4.79	4.43	5.29	4.90
Delhi	0.07	1.20	1.74	2.24	3.67
Percent Population change during	**1951-61**	**1961-71**	**1971-81**	**1981-91**	**1991-2001**
Maharashtra	43.87	44.88	33.50	2.82	34.78
Rajasthan	13.80	25.43	21.57	-9.85	15.58
M.P	36.73	39.24	28.90	10.20	12.75
Gujarat	9.30	10.21	3.59	5.04	6.90
Karnataka	24.66	25.52	29.99	14.62	26.53

Percent Population change during	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91	1991-2001
UP	24.93	2.15	13.49	24.52	17.50
Delhi	—	70.68	46.33	28.08	63.85

Source: As in Table 7.1.

Table 7.5: Distribution of Jain Population by Rural-Urban Background

State/Union Territory	Total population	Jain Population	Urban	Rural
India	**1,02,86,10,328**	**42,25,053**	**3,215,706**	**1,009,347**
Jammu & Kashmir	1,01,43,700	2,518	2,040	478
Himachal Pradesh	60,77,900	1,408	1,148	260
Punjab	2,43,58,999	39,276	37,265	2,011
Chandigarh				
Uttaranchal	9,00,635	2,592	2,570	22
Haryana	84,89,349	9,249	8,167	1,082
Delhi	2,11,44,564	57,167	50,829	6, 338
Rajasthan	1,38,50,507	1,55,122	153,068	2,054
Uttar Pradesh	5,65,07,188	6,50,493	435,321	215,172
Bihar	16,61,97,921	2,07,11	177,208	29,903
Sikkim	8,29,98,509	16,085	12,903	3,182
Arunachal Pradesh	5,40,851	183	126	57
Nagaland	10,97,968	216	130	86
Manipur	19,90,036	2,093	1,984	109
Mizoram	21,66,788	1461	1,369	92
Tripura	8,88,573	179	45	134
Meghalaya	31,99,203	477	287	190
Assam	23,18,822	772	432	340
West Bengal	2,66,55,528	23,957	20,354	3,603
Jharkhand	8,01,76,197	55,223	45,869	9,354

State/Union Territory	Total population	Jain Population	Urban	Rural
Orissa	2,69,45,829	16,301	11,688	4,613
Chhattis-garh	3,68,04,660	9,154	6,038	3,116
Madhya Pradesh	2,08,33,803	56,103	45,837	10,266
Gujarat	6,03,48,023	5,45,446	419,929	125,517
Daman & Diu	5,06,71,017	5,25,305	454,964	70,341
Dadra & Nag. Hav.	1,58,204	268	212	56
Maharashtra	2,20,490	864	601	263
Andhra Pradesh	9,68,78,627	13,01,843	1,015,286	286,557
Karnataka	7,62,10,007	41,846	39,856	1,990
Goa	5,28,50,562	4,12,659	193,758	218,901
Lakshad-weep	13,47,668	820	721	99
Kerala	60,650	–	–	–
Tamil Nadu	3,18,41,374	4,528	2,328	2,200
Pondicherry	6,24,05,679	83,359	72,427	10,932
And. & Nico. Is.	9,74,345	952	928	24

Source: Census of India (2001).

Table 7.6: Sex Ratio among the Jains, 2001

State/UT	Jain Population	Proportion of Jain Population	Sex Ratio	Sex ratio (0-6)	Proportion of child Population in the age group 0-6 yrs.
India	**42,25,053**	**0.4**	**940**	**870**	**10.6**
Jammu &	2,518	0.0	856	887	10.9
Kashmir	1,408	0.0	877	644	10.5
Himachal	39,276	0.2	914	758	10.2
Pradesh	2,592	0.3	940	940	10.0
Punjab	9,249	0.1	930	833	9.8
Chandigarh	57,167	0.3	911	798	11.3
Uttaranchal	1,55,122	1.1	935	849	11.3
Haryana	6,50,493	1.2	960	878	10.7
Delhi	2,07,11	0.1	911	846	11.9
Rajasthan	16,085	0.0	904	853	11.0
Uttar Pradesh	183	0.0	664	615	11.5
Bihar	216	0.0	662	545	15.7
Sikkim	2,093	0.1	852	768	11.7
Arunachal	1461	0.1	842	771	10.1
Pradesh	179	0.0	738	1000	16.8
Nagaland	477	0.0	916	1036	11.9
Manipur	772	0.0	906	926	13.5
Mizoram	23,957	0.1	866	922	10.5
Tripura	55,223	0.1	929	920	9.6
Meghalaya	16,301	0,1	928	852	11.1
Assam	9,154	0.0	933	895	10.8
West Bengal	56,103	0.3	922	922	11.7
Jharkhand	5,45,446	0.9	925	906	11.3
Orissa	5,25,305	1.0	969	832	9.2
Chhattisgarh	268	0.2	1000	1071	10.8
Madhya Pradesh	864	0.4	895	831	13.8
Gujarat	13,01,843	1.3	942	862	10.1
Daman & Diu	41,846	0.1	936	912	11.3
Dadra & Nag.	4,12,659	0.8	926	892	12.0
Hav.	820	0.1	885	867	11.5
Maharashtra	-	-	-	-	-
Andhra Pradesh	4,528	0.0	996	845	9.7
Karnataka	83,359	0.1	933	889	10.8
Goa	952	0.1	900	692	11.6
Lakshadweep	23	0.0	917	500	13.0

Table 7.7: Literacy, Female Literacy and Work Participation Rate in India by religious Communities

Religious Communities	Literacy Rate	Female Literacy Rate	Work Participation
Hindus	65.1	53.2	40.4
Muslims	59.1	50.1	31.3
Christians	80.3	76.2	39.7
Sikhs	69.4	63.1	37.7
Buddhists	72.7	61.7	40.6
Jains	94.1	90.6	32.9
Others	47.0		48.4
Total/ Average	**64.4**		**39.1**

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table 7.8: Distribution of Category of Workers by Religious Communities, 2001

Religious Communities	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	House-Industry Workers	Others	Total
Hindus	33.1	27.6	3.8	35.5	100.0
Muslims	20.7	22.0	8.1	49.1	100.0
Christians	29.2	15.3	2.7	52.8	100.0
Sikhs	32.4	16.8	3.4	47.3	100.0
Buddhists	20.4	37.6	2.9	39.2	100.0
Jains	11.7	3.3	3.3	81.7	100.0
Others	49.9	32.6	3.2	14.3	100.0
Average	**31.7**	**26.5**	**4.2**	**37.6**	**100.0**

Source: Census of India, 2001.

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8

Jains in Development: Challenging Some 'Religion and Development' Arguments

Nathan R.B. Loewen

On the thirteenth of July 2006, Shantilal Muttha declared to me and a group of western scholars that his organization was going to set about improving the quality of India's government schools. The name of the project is "BJS-EDUQIP". Bharatriya Jain Sanghathana – Educational Quality Improvement Programme. This is, for all intents and purposes, an 'education for all' NGO project whose current and planned scale operations are substantial by any measure. BJS-EDUQIP continues to sign memos of understanding with local and state-level governments in order to forward its project.[1] These activities follow what might be the 'normal' profile of a faith-based NGO (FBO) as part of a healthy civil society. BJS functions as an "intermediate institution" (Berger 2005), positioned between the structures of family and state. This organization makes its religious roots clear while seeming to hold no proselytizing aspirations. Listening to Mr. Muttha, I thought that this sort of social involvement by a Jain is not normal.

Far from being ostracized, he is honoured by the Jain community. Mr. Muttha identifies as part of India's Jain communities. Jains have historically occupied a limited range of economic sectors in Indian society. Most of today's Jains fit the profile of India's upper middle classes. Mr. Muttha would seem to fit the Jains' notion of a *puṇyashāli*: one who has much merit (Laidlaw 1985). Usually, such persons use their wealth to support temples and festival rituals, or other projects that are clearly understood to support the Jain community. Doing so demonstrates that the person has likely inherited auspicious *karma*, which point

to the strong likelihood of even more auspicious future lives. BJS-EDUQIP does not seem to match these causes. I am curious as to whether social involvements such as this have a link back to the Jain community's beliefs and doctrines.

Grass keeps low and does not get cut, but trees grow high, and do" (K.C. Sogani, Jaipur, June 26 2006). This Jain proverb expresses a norm of abstention from social involvements. It is a strategy that contributed to the Jains' passage through socio-political circumstances of Hindu rulers, Muslim rulers, independence and partition as well as the modernization of Nehru and liberalization under the Hindu nationalist BJP. The very public nature of initiatives like that of BJS-EDUQIP would seem to betray this Jain proverb.

I am also curious about whether Jain social involvements in education prove some current approaches to the topic of 'religion and development' to be in need of significantly further sophistication. I am having difficulty reconciling the activities of Jains and Jain communities in development-related activities with essentialist approaches to religions in many development discourses. I plan to infer from what I have gathered in order to understand the nature of Jains' social engagements. Much of my information was gathered as a participant in the 2010 International Summer School for Jain Studies (ISSJS)[2] , which took place just prior to the monsoon; as a result, my paper is subject to what Chambers calls the 'dry season bias' (1983). Life in India is never dull, but it is imaginable that the country only hits its stride after the rains have arrived.

Many Jains are involved in establishing and supporting schools, hospitals and other work for social benefit. I can find doctrinal support for Jains' pursuit of such religious goals as moksha, but no similarly robust overview of Jains' social engagements. It is not clear to me that many current assumptions and theories about religious dimensions of socio-economic change fit the context of Jains' social involvements. The literature studying the Jains will often make general remarks about their overall high economic standing, but their social involvements are largely overlooked by scholars. This paper will explore the above issues related to Jain involvements amid India's socio-economic development.

'Development' can be summarized as 'socio-economic change,

ostensibly for the better'. The development community[3] would agree that 'development studies' is instrumental and applied in its orientation. The point is not only to generate knowledge for it own sake, but to address the real-world and real-time problems of human misery. Development involvements are not benign; they have an agenda with particular goals and objectives. The field of development studies is not only reflective, it is explicitly oriented around praxis, policy and practice. As countries and societies change over time, and development studies is interested in these changes.

Education is one of the most powerful instruments for reducing the miseries of poverty and inequality. Education lays a foundation for sustained economic growth by creating skills and capabilities that would be otherwise impossible. Up until 2006, the ending age of compulsory education in India was ten years; it then increased to age thirteen (UNESCO). A series of reforms were also passed at the federal level. India's new National Curriculum Framework (NCF) was introduced in 2005. The reform was to move away from rote learning towards an enriched. Since more than one half of India's gross enrollment rate comes from village schools (Bruneforth, Michael et al, 2008, 32), the country is challenged with improving education on a decentralized basis.

In 2009 the federal government passed its *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* legislation; the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act that guarantees education as a fundamental right to each and every child. Education for all is now a legal right for all children between the ages of 6 and 14. This ground-breaking right-to-education act provides the building blocks to ensure that all children are in school and hopefully out of the labour force.

The objective of this legislation is to meet the needs of the almost 200 million unschooled children living across the country. It is one of India's first major programs to cover upper primary education (grades 6-8). The objective is to "enroll all 6-14 year-olds in school by 2010, retain them in school, and provide them with quality education at least till grade eight" (UNESCO). Other objectives are meant to facilitate the general program by ensuring that a primary school is available within one kilometer of all habitations, "99 per cent of habitations having a primary school within one kilometer, and 92 per cent with an upper primary school within 3 kilometers.

While access and enrollments to primary schools are good, upper primary access and participation remain challenges" (UNICEF). The objectives also include mobilizing communities in favor of education, supporting the training of teachers, developing teaching materials, and monitoring learning outcomes (UNICEF). Furthermore, there is to be no direct (school fees) or indirect costs (uniforms, textbooks, mid-day meals, transportation) borne by the child or the parents. To this end, state and federal levels of India's governments are estimated to spend an enormous US$ 17.75 billion on primary education in the course of establishing this program (World Bank).

The burden of building India's education is not borne solely by its governments. Around one-third of funding for primary education comes from private sources, and this correlates with almost one-third of primary pupils attending private schools (Bruneforth, Michael et al, 2008, 27; 37). These sources would include families, enterprises, foundations and religious organizations. One out of every four private school pupils is enrolled in a public school that is actually within the village community (ibid., 38) It should be noted that in Indian parlance 'public schools' are privately run whereas 'government schools' are those provided by the welfare state.

"Creative and sustained initiatives are crucial to train more than one million new and untrained teachers within the next five years and to reinforce the skills of existing teachers to ensure child-friendly education and prevent children from dropping out of school and being engaged in labour" (UNICEF). By the term 'creative' there is a recognition that the private and civil society sectors will be required to accomplish India's educational goals. In terms of the latter, over 7 000 NGOs are participating in the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* initiative (World Bank). It is highly likely that Jain organizations are among them, and that they will play a crucial role in this key to India's development.

A "religious turn in development" (Pearson and Tomalin 2008, 49) has gone largely unnoticed by religious studies scholars. The recognition of "spiritual and cultural 'assets' " (Hickey and Mohan 2003) in development studies is a function of a recognition that development "depend[s] on values and on alternative conceptions of the good life" (Kanbur 2006). What counts as 'good' social and

economic change is constructed and contested on various grounds. This is reflected by the World Bank's introduction of participatory rural assessments and the poverty reduction strategy paper process. Development is now largely considered to be defined as "human flourishing in its fullest sense" (Alkire 2002, 182).

While it would seem that religious studies would fit into this wider perspective, development scholars retain a Āgculture of disbelief" (Thomas 2005, 221). Recent adaptations of Max Weber's claims about the economic inertia of Asian religions leads to arguments that religions can foster anti-developmental attitudes. 'Development' can therefore be triggered by altering religious beliefs in order to bring tangible benefits to persons in developing countries (Sherman 1997, 37).[4] This approach adopts antiquated philosophical presumptions that all religious phenomena to have an essence that transcendently unites them. For example:

Poverty and social justice are the most immediate and central areas of common concern; ancient core concerns of virtually every known religion, they lie at the very center of the work of the development institutions generally, and the World Bank more specifically. This focus on poverty is a strong bond that ties both faith and development communities to the global consensus that underlies the 2000 Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. (Marshall 2005, 1)

This equivocation of faith and spirituality with religion and religious phenomena makes only for parsimonious construal's. A Swissaid publication claims that, "in the end all religions share certain core ethical principles, and thus they share a view of the value of the human being that is independent of religions and confessions" (Holenstein 2005, 23). Another claims that all religions have a, "sacred kernel of reality" (Verhelst and Tyndale 2002, 8). Terms like 'faith' and 'spirituality' are undoubtedly a part of the religious studies syllabus, but resorting to them actually fosters selective engagements which ignore connections? the larger context of religious studies. This paper will show that religions do not share core concerns with each other or the development community. The Jains are a case in point.

D.N. Bhargava (June 15 2010) presented a discussion of the elemental Jain understanding of life. There is not only birth and death, but also rebirth. Life in this world is miserable; there is no

happiness in worldly life whatsoever; what appears to be happiness is actually a source of suffering and misery for reasons. This suffering is due to some kind of bondage and spiritual ignorance, which the Jains call *mithyātva*. In this sense, the origins of the Jain tradition are focused on the human condition. However, the 'suffering' of the human condition of Jainism is not that with which development is concerned. Jains will claim that these are verities which have and will exist forever; these are the constituents of that which is. The very empirical situation of poverty, however, is not taken up by Jain scriptures.

The origin of human suffering is a result of the active aspect of karma, which retains individuals within the circle of worldly existence, or *saṭsāra;* this "force.... consists in the passion of attraction (*rāga*) and repulsion (*dveśa*) or rather root like perverted attitude (*mithyātva*) towards truth" (Singhvi S.N 233). Each individual must be brought to face the knot (*granthi*) of the passions; to realize the status of suffering and the impossibility of escaping this within the status quo. The process of *yathāprav?ttakarana* is that of undergoing progressive purification of karmic matter, firstly through the adoption of right belief and then right thought and conduct. That is, the mere acknowledgement of one's state of karmic suffering and bondage has the capacity to effect some diminishment of that bondage. Cutting the knot of the passions is known at *granthibheda*. And it is a lack of understanding about one's true nature that reinforces this knot. For the Jains ignorance about karma and ignorance caused by karma is the source of bondage to recurring lives of suffering (Singhvi SN 229). A person's consciousness grants the capacity of self-awareness, so that knowledge about karmas might be obtained. This is *bhāvyatvā*, the capability to become free from the effects of and bondage to karmas.

All of this is revealed to the Jains through the teachings of the *Tirthankaras* and a legacy of commentaries on those teachings. The *Tirthankaras* were great spiritual teachers who renounced the world to become mendicants. In the course of their ascetic and monastic life, these persons became conscious of how to transcend the world and its sufferings. And so they obtain their title as 'ford-crossers' by which other humans can also reach the 'other side'.

Jains do take the human condition very seriously. Emphasis is repeatedly laid upon the humanity of each of the twenty-four

Tirthankaras, who provide the origins of Jain doctrine, belief, thought and practice. This humanity is emphasized in polemical contradistinction to other religions. While their religion does not emanate from a divine source, Jains will emphasize that each *Tirthankara* ultimately transcended all the constraints of the human condition; and it is on the basis of this transcendence – *mokṣa* – that their teachings are validated.

The Jains themselves are aware of the importance of charity in the history leading up to post-partition India. "In earlier times we know how Jains used to share their wealth in building temples/ *dharmashālas*, serving the monks, setting up educational and health services institutions and secretly support the needy members of the community" (Shugan Jain SN, 4). This would seem to not be the case today, where "owing to various reasons the educational institutions being run by [Jains] are not known to many of the Jain community, let alone the public" (Sugalchand ji Jain vi). My impression is that Jains are aware of the more high-profile social involvements in the name of the public good. "Most of us [Jains] are aware that Jains also provide various services in the medical and healthcare sectors" (Sugalchand ji Jain vi). When asked, Jains will mention various medical clinics and assistance to the handicapped (e.g., Mahaveer Eye Hospital, Manakchand Betala Maternity Hospital, Singhvi Charitable Trust to serve visually handicapped, free dispensaries in Perambur, Saidapet, Triplicane). Invariably an inquirer will also be told of the establishment of animal shelters for the cause of animal welfare.

Education figures in the lore of Jain antiquity. When some Jains migrated to South India during *Bhadrabāhu*'s time (fourth century BCE) their scriptures and teaching were in the vernaculars of Tamil and Prakrit rather than the Sanskrit of the Brahmanical elites. Furthermore the Jains brought gender equality to education. The Jain scholars were not only male, but also female: *kurattiyārs* and *manakkigals*, women who were teaching the Jain doctrine, ethics, logic and medicine. Naladiar, a Jain work of the time, states that education is the only medicine for all ills (Sugalchand ji Jain 7). *Arungala Cheppu*, another Jain work, states that even an outcast who is educated and enlightened is an equivalent of God. (Sugalchand ji Jain 7)

Jains themselves will also make vigorous claims that their

religious beliefs have always had the effect of social benefit. In 1892, *Shri Bharātvarshiya Digamber Jain (Dharam Sanrakshini) Māhasabha* (SBDM) was established. The SBDM's continues today, serving the interests of the Digamber Jain community. At first a series of hostels was established in Bombay (Mumbai) and Lucknow. These were places of stay for families at festivals and celebrations. In 1910 this organization began supporting the establishment of schools for young Jains. The purpose was, at first, to provide education for 'moral conduct' through the study of the Jain Agamas and language studies of Sanskrit and Prakrit. The purpose was to prepare scholars to sustain the functioning of the Jains' temples. Not long after their inception, the SBDM also began supporting the study of basic mathematics and Hindi literacy. Today, the SBDM supports approximately 150 out of the nearly 1500 schools operated by Digambara Jains in India. This support is neither in terms of management nor fulfilling the school's yearly operational budgets. Rather, the organization directs donations of materials, supplies, scholarships and financial support on a short-term basis.[5]

Over the last 100 years, the Jains have lost control of many temples, particularly in Southern India and Bengal. According to N.K. Sethi, there is a connection between this loss of control over traditionally Jain temples (Sethi July 2, 2010). He has visited hundreds of temples that are either neglected or have fallen under Hindu or Muslim control. Whenever it is possible to establish a temple trust, some control can be regained. The legitimacy of that trust can be established partly through its association with a school that provides education for the wider community, and not exclusively for Jains. Mr. Sethi noted that not even a single temple will remain without education, and that there will be no lack of money to protect images and temples if education is strongly supported.

When I asked him how does being 'Jain' relate to education, Mr. Sethi added something further beyond strategies for community and temple preservation. He noted that "in our agamas we find that the body dies, but the soul is immortal; whatever knowledge you acquire will go with you into the next world. So to study is the biggest religious activity; from our early life we are being told these things" (Sethi July 2, 2010). This was the soteriological aspect of educational promotion. While he did not

say it in so many words, Mr. Sethi's point seemed to be that this-worldly conversion of souls to the Jain dharma needn't be the objective of Jain-run schools. Rather, simply enabling children's abilities to learn in this life would prepare them for learning more in the next life. If this is proselytizing, it is certainly incremental!

From what I can gather, the Jains' impact upon education in India is considerable for its size. According to Shugan Jain, there are 4,465 schools all over India established by, or managed by Jains. These institutions provide educational services for an estimated 10-15 million students of all age groups. It is worthwhile to bear in mind that the same numbers are used to describe the *total* population of Jains in India today. These millions of children are obviously not exclusively Jain (Shugan Jain S.N 412). In the course of another conversation with S.L. Jain, head of the Mahavir Senior Model School, I was informed that in Delhi alone there are almost 40 public schools that are run by Jains that each have close to 1,000 students per school. (July 3, 2010). This school is one among several that I was able to visit during a short stay in Delhi.

Many of these schools are founded and run by Jains without having 'Jain' in the name; e.g. Heritage School or Banyan Tree, both of which are some of the most elite schools in the Delhi area. The Mahavir Senior Model School (MSMS) is among these elite schools of New Delhi. On the frontispieces of its yearbooks, I noticed the following declarations about the school: "An English Medium Minority School run by Mahavira Foundation" (Mandoline 2004-5, and, "Peace through vegetarianism and non violence" (Mandoline 2007-8). Except for the 'Mahavir' in its name, these statements were the closest evidence I could find in the school's literature that the school itself was indeed 'Jain'.

Given these facts, I would have difficulty naming the school as a clear example of a 'Faith-Based Organization'. Mahavir Senior Model School has a religious affiliation, but it is not at all recognizably 'religious' in a manner that would set it apart from other public schools. This demonstrates the limits of the term 'faith-based' and its currency in the 'religion and development' discourse. The notion 'faith-based' carries with it a Western secularist fallacy which claims that the world can be clearly divided into the 'secular' and the 'faith-based' or 'religion'. The work of BJS-EDUQIP and the SBDM also demonstrate this problem. It is easy of conceive of a

secular school, but a faith-based school can easily retain all the descriptive features of the secular school. Can a secular school can become 'faith-based' may simply by virtue of who established the school or administers it in trust? Many Jain communities are deeply involved in education, but these involvements are neither aggressively nor insidiously 'religious'.

And so an 'is/is not' aspect of Jain involvements in development emerges from this discussion of education. The schools of the SBDM and the examples of MSMS and BJS-EDUQIP are distinctively Jain-based educational initiatives that are and are not 'religious'. The Jains themselves have a doctrine which lends itself well to understanding this is/is-not situation: *anekāntavāda*. The 'doctrine of *anekānt*', as it is sometimes called, is used by contemporary Jains for a variety of apologetic purposes. I propose *'anekānt'* to understand the ambivalence of the Jains' relation to social involvements and development.

The philosophical purpose of *anekānt* is to have the subject acknowledge the partiality of his or her knowledge of the mundane world. This is meant to open the possibility of considering other subject's propositions, which are similarly compromised as partial. In other words, this is simply a means of starting dialectic.[6] "The point of Jaina dialectic is that the language used by each party is *underspecific* – it fails fully to specify the proposition being expressed. What each party states is not false but incompletely specific" (Ganeri 2001, 133). *X* is true, but *X* is also not the entire truth. And only from the perspective *P* can *X* be made as a proposition; this is not an expression of uncertainty, but an attempt to specify the perspective and the proposition as thoroughly as possible; an expression of the Jain objective of a comprehensive understanding of 'that which is'.

In the case of Jains and their social involvements, I think it is quite safe to say that Jains are and are not involved in development. The approaches to educational initiatives are and are not religious. And when I turn to the Jains' beliefs and doctrines, I find strong evidence to say that Jains are with and without theological resources to espouse that being Jain does entail social involvements like development-related initiatives.

The *Tirthankaras'* renunciation of the world and its forms of happiness entails a correlative renunciation of development

objectives. The ostensible goal of development is positive socio-political change, where the people of a society obtain a state of affairs in which needs are provided for and living is viewed with positive satisfaction. Development is focused on the beneficial establishment of the layperson's life.

The lay-Jain life is shaped by the life set out for the ascetics *Sadhus* and *Sadhvis*. The relationship from the householder to the ascetic is that the life of the former should be always inclined towards increasing approximations of the latter. As Cort notes, "[T]he ideological prescription for the lay life involves ever-increasing restrictions upon the layperson's conduct and interactions, with the goal of increasing spiritual purity by both decreasing the previously accumulated store of karma and stopping the influx of new karma. It is based closely upon the prescription for the mendicant life" (2001 127).

There is a set of guidelines for laypersons which might redeem this portrait of Jain beliefs and doctrine as socially disengaged. Aside from the various vows and duties of abstention that are incumbent upon the householder, there are the four kinds of gifts which should be given to deserving recipients: the *Atithisanvibhāgavrāta*. These are gifts of food, medicine, knowledge and fearlessness (Sogani SN 318). On first glance these four gifts seem like the key to understanding the doctrinal grounds for social engagement. The correlations with development would also seem to be clear, where the four gifts would address the fundamental development objectives of poverty reduction, health services, education and security.

The description of gift-giving, or *dāna,* in economic terms has thus far been exclusively considered through the lens of ritual theory, with reference to Marcel Mauss' thesis. The *Atithisanvibhāgavrāta* are not focused on ritual practices, from the outset. This is the actual giving of four types of charity: *shastra dan, ahar dan, aushadh dan* and *abhāya dan*.

In the context of education in Southern India, Sugalchangji Jain picks up on *Atithisanvibhāgavrāta* as a justification for Jain schools. "The religious duty of educating the masses and giving them right values is known as *Shastra Dan*. *Ahar Dan* is feeding the poor, *Aushadh Dan* is giving medical aid to the sick and *abhāya Dan* is providing shelter to the homeless" (Sugalchand ji Jain 4). He notes

that Jains in the state of Tamil Nadu run fifty plus schools and institutions, mostly in and around Chennai. The schools serve 'Jain' meals: without salt, oil and spices are offered free of cost. However, the note is added that "This meal is taken just once a day, as a sort of penance" (Sugalchangji Jain 5). Nevertheless, *aushadh dan* is translated into free diagnostic centres and clinics, and *abhāya dan* is understood to take the form of providing shelter to animals in the form of *pinjrapols* and *ghowshalas;* these are the bird hospitals and animal hospices for which Jains are famous.

Already it should be apparent that there is not a one-to-one correlation between this particular reading of *Atithisanvibhāgavrāta* in contemporary Tamil Nadu and the objectives of development discourse. Basic education and health services are shared, "they strictly adhere to the religious tenet of 'alleviation of misery' – which in reality translates into education and medical aid" (Sugalchangji Jain 4). But bland dinners and bird hospitals do not add up to poverty alleviation and the provision of security. At least the latter could be explained in terms of Jains' renunciation of danda, where Jains are not known to take up the political vocation of policing.

In other Jain scriptures, such as the *Prashnavyākarana Sutra*, the gifts are described differently. This sutra speaks of kindness (*dayā*), security (*ṛṣkhā*), salutariness (*kallāna*), fearlessness (*abhāya*) ('*Angasuttāni*' 6.1.3). *Surāchārya* wrote a chapter on the gift of fearlessness in the *Dānādiprakarana* (Treatise on Gift Giving, etc.). Hibbets summarizes the upshot of the chapter: "to give fearlessness is to refrain from harming any creature at all" (Hibbets 1999, 445). *Hemachandra* says that the gifts worthy of honour are threefold: teaching, material to support monks, and fearlessness. The latter is defined as ahimsa, avoiding injury to beings through destroying their lives and causing physical or mental pain (Hibbets 1999, 445).

What these three references bring into relief is the classical and doctrinal understanding of these gifts and to whom they should be given. Laidlaw does note the distinction of gross versus subtle fearlessness (1995, 75), where the examples given by Sugalchand ji Jain are seen as lesser forms of gifts. *Dravya*, or physical, fearlessness is granting amnesty or rescuing an animal from slaughter; whereas bhaav fearlessness involves teaching the Jaina dharma that sets humans on the right path. *Bhāva* refers to existence itself rather than mere physical being. This distinction between *dravya* and *bhāva*

runs through the three other gifts as well. For example, education should be given to persons who would find them useful for the practice of austerities and pursuit of studies at a high level. The gift of education is traditionally the giving of books to ascetics in their pursuit of *mokṣa*.

In fact the Terapanthi sect split from the Shvetāmbaras on the grounds that true religious practice only involves teaching the Jain path, avoiding harm to other beings and refraining from violent actions; whereas saving animals or doing acts of charity are not truly correct practices (Hibbets 1999, 446). And so, gifts that are given to ascetics are seen as worthwhile acts. "Just as water washes away blood, so proper gifts to saints would for certain wipe off the sins accumulated on account of the unavoidable household affairs." (Sogani SN 318, citing *Ratnakarandashravakāchāra* of *Samantabhadra*, 114).

Banarasi Dasa in his *Nātakasamayasāra* (13-38) has given the following list of transgressions of right faith: fear of public censure, attachment towards worldly pleasures, thinking of attainment of worldly pleasures in the next birth, praise of false scriptures, service of wrong believers. (Singhvi SN 232). Given this final point, it would seem that the efforts of the Jains in southern India are clearly transgressions. The outer manifestations of poverty must to some degree reflect something about the inner state of the individual. This can move in two directions: one would be that the individual must be lacking the faith and knowledge to conduct the self in such a manner as to take leave of poverty through the proper life of a householder. Another direction would be that the individual's state of poverty leads to a fixation upon mere survival, and therefore removes the possibility of that person realizing the soul-obscuring state of being. Benevolence to the first is seen as wasteful, whereas to the second would be useful to the point that the individual can begin to consider religious goals instead of mere survival. In such cases, going without 'bread' removes the opportunity to realize that there is 'more than bread alone'. "Vasunandi tells us that the gift to *Pātras* is just like a seed sown in a fertile land; the gift to *Kupātras* is just like a seed sown in a semi-fertile land; and the gift to *Apātras* is just like a seed sown in a barren land." (Sogani SN 318).

The above descriptions of fearlessness illustrate just how the

Jain doctrine of *Atithisanvibhāgavrāta* is difficult to associate with development. The denigration of mundane social involvements is explained. Helping others materially may be necessary, but material help is no help. *'Bhāva'*-type help only strengthens the sense of attachment and dependency upon the world. The example I was told was that giving money to one who has none ultimately strengthens and conserves that one's attachment to money; the true gift would be to show and tell such ones that attachment is to be avoided or done away with. The logic is that whatever is done, should decrease attachment rather than increase.

So a strong case can be made 'X does not exist'. From a doctrinally-informed perspective, Jain social involvement does not exist; and, there is no clear grounds for a Jain theology of development. This point strongly contradicts the claims made of religions in so many religion and development discourses. It is simply not the case that poverty and social justice is among the "ancient core concerns" of the Jain tradition, which must be included among "virtually every known religion" (Marshall 2005, 1). This approach to the Jains comes up short on affirming the same Agsacred kernel of reality" (Verhelst and Tyndale 2002, 8) that would identify a commonality of the "essential things that the faiths want to say about development" (Tyndale 2002, 9). The traditional Jain doctrines and beliefs simply do not sustain this approach. This unique religious tradition is at unease with the basic objectives of development.

On the other hand, compassion is said to figure among the characteristics of right belief, along with tranquility (*prashama/ shama*) an absence of desire for worldly things (*saṃvega*) and belief in the doctrinal axioms of the Jain tradition (*āstikāya;* Singvhi SN 230). This is not a compassion based on passion, but one which is formed by the other characteristics of right belief (*samyag darśān*). This compassion informed by tranquility is calm, and does not do impulsive actions. Compassion without desire for worldly things will act on the grounds that 'happiness' is not worldly but achieved from within. Fully aware of the Jain dharma teachings, this compassion will have the "tendency of proving helpful in the miseries of others" (Singhvi SN 230). And so others are 'not left to their *karmas*'.

Right belief does relate to social interactions. The one whose

vision of the world is correctly informed, according to the Jains, will not have aversion for ugly beings (*nirvicikitsā*). I suppose this could mean persons living in poverty. Rather, such a person's heart is filled with intention to support them. This a self-less and non-selfish intention (*vātsalya*) that considers the other's needs for true happiness. Setting others on the right path (*sthitikarana*) is the principle guiding any involvements borne of this compassion. These sorts of involvements lead to an experience of happiness from sharing selflessly with others (*prabhāvanā;* Shugan Jain June 10 2010).

The attitude fitting for this understanding of compassion is encapsulated by the poem "Meeri Bhavana" by J.K. Mukhatara (1877-1968). "Meeri Bhavana" is not only a popular *bhajan;* since being composed in 1916 it has become a Jain prayer that is sufficiently common to be recited at the daily opening assemblies of many Jain-run schools. In fact, I was given a small fifteen-page pamphlet containing the prayer during a school visit.

The second stanza does consider the welfare of others:

They, who have overcome the desire for sensual pleasures and maintain the state of equanimity; they are engrossed everyday in the welfare of others as well as their own; they practice the hard penance of selflessness; such knowledgeable ascetics (they) conquer /overcome the pains of mundane worldly existence.

Here the welfare of others is attended to by the social benefit of the ascetic *sadhus* and *sadhvis*. The service of ascetics to society is to demonstrate their independence from society. They witness to the world-renouncing happiness of *mokṣa*.

The fifth stanza breaks into a new direction, and articulates the welfare of others in terms of compassion: May I always maintain a feeling of friendship towards all living beings; May the spring of compassion always flow for those who are in pain and are suffering; May I never get angry with those who are bad cruel and wrongly directed people; May I maintain a sense of equanimity while dealing with such persons.

This is the compassion of right belief that is not averse to others and seeks out their welfare. And this other-awareness and compassion is translated into a desideratum: May distress and suffering no longer exist and may it rain on time; May the king be righteously inclined and do justice to all his subjects; May the diseases, epidemics and famine cease to spread and exist; May

Ahimsa pervade the entire universe and bring benevolence to all. (Stanza 10)

This, it would seem, is the 'social involvement and development' stanza. It is not only an expression of a rightly-held desire for the welfare of others, but it also contains a social-political request for good governance and social justice. I find it so interesting that the righteousness and justice of the government is a precondition for the cessation of diseases, epidemics and famine. This stanza places into a nutshell what the whole emphasis of development tries to underscore.

These aspirations (*bhāvana*) are not consistent with the classical Jain tradition, as noted above. The famines, diseases and epidemics of ancient times are not seen as events to which the early Jain community responded with social involvements. The Digambara account of the Shvetambara origins does refer to socio-economic circumstances; during a *durbhikshā*, a 'calamity', some Jains backslid to become the Shvetambaras. *Durbhikshā* is 'a time when it is difficult to gain alms' (Dundas 2002, 47), which could refer to a famine but could just as likely refer to a time of socio-political difficulty. This would particularly be the case if other forms of religiosity were ascendant (such as Buddhism) or if rulers chose not to tolerate sky-clad mendicants (such as the later Mughal rulers). In any case, that Jain community re-interpreted their practices with some innovations; in this case, it just so happened to be the donning of robes.

"Meeri Bhavana" may well express a change in what many a Jain personally believes to be 'my aspirations'. These may very well be the origins of modern social consciousness among the Jains and their communities. Hostels, hospitals, clinics and schools were established in large numbers to serve the Jain community; many of these are now public-service institutions. Jains' involvements in education might be seen in this way. While Dundas claims that the "Jain laity does not generally regard its attitudes towards matters of government policy" (2002, 191), it seems to be clear that many Jains actually do.

Perhaps therein lay the foundations of engaged Jain theologies. These foundations are the ongoing dynamics of the *anekānt*-dialectic explored in this paper. Among the Jains' beliefs and practices are competing perspectives on social engagement. The dynamics are

not that of one extreme or the other, but a series of partial perspectives that range across a broad theological spectrum. It is not so much that Jains are 'indescribable' on this topic. It is more that any essentialist approach to the Jains in development will be "incompletely specific" (Ganeri 2001, 133).

I believe that this paper has overviewed a subject that will require significant further investigation. Not since 1980 has a major study of Jains in society been undertaken (Sangave); based on my conversations, interviews, visits and readings another of these projects needs to be undertaken. India herself is undergoing substantial social and political changes. As is evident in the field of education, the Jain communities are playing a key role in establishing the future development of India. I believe that a study of this sort will definitely establish that the Jains are in development.

NOTES

1. BJS-EDUQIP first began an demonstration project in 2005 with the Andaman and Nicobar islands off the eastern Indian coast. In 2006 the project obtained federal and state approval to expand into Goa and Gujarat. By 2009, over 42 000 Guajarati schools were engaged by BJS-EDUQIP programme. BJS is now operational in 24 states. BJS actively solicits the secretaries of education in a state-by-state implementation of its programme. BJS retains an office of around 60 professionals working on administration, information technology, teacher training, promotions and pedagogical design.
2. Since I was here at the behest of the ISSJS, the people I met were largely sympathetic or contributors to the ISSJS programme. The ISSJS is established in order to promote the standing and identity of the Jains in India and abroad. In research terms, the only people I met were 'gatekeepers'. I chose to treat the guest speakers of the ISSJS programme as 'informants'. The references to these persons will either be in the form of names with dates of their talks or with reference to the compiled study notes (SN), which can be requested online at http://jainstudies.org/study-notes.php. That term is used loosely here, as these 'informants' are a self-selected group. I did meet with some persons relatively external to the ISSJS programme in the final days of the programme; these were heads of institutions, trusts and community-based organizations (CBOs). And so, this was my introduction to the community, and the level at which I remained. All my fieldwork was done in English among Jains who are among India's middle classes. Within the limits of

my project, I did not have any means of determining whether my informants were withholding information, supplying partial information or possibly shaping the conduct of research.

In the post-development context of globalization it is difficult for a Western scholar to do research without 'colonizing' others such that levels of domination are reinforced. My research project is no different, but perhaps this 'power imbalance' is mitigated by the support base for my project. The possibility for this project was owed to the generosity and trust of the Jains of North America (JAINA) and India through the ISSJS. I did not make overt efforts to overcome the hierarchical relations between myself and the persons interviewed. If overcoming means self-aware, then yes. But if overcoming means self-consciously attempting to dialectically mitigate the hierarchies, then no. By remitting this report to the leadership of ISSJS and all of the 'informants', there is some dissemination of the results back to those with the greatest stake in what I have written.

All of this is to say that my work at this point is wholly incapable of living up to the most basic expectations of academic rigour; for this reason, please do not expect what follows to, "resist the obviousness of the ideology and be attentive to other voices in order to perceive the role of other values within a culture" (Cort 2001, 12). My awareness of this shortcoming only strengthens my resolve to return for independent studies more closely focused on the problematic raised in the following pages.

3. This is partly an academic community of researchers whose bases of operations ranges from universities to the staff of civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs, campaign groups, religious groups, governments, international financial institutions such as the World Bank, multi-lateral organizations such as the United Nations, and government donor agencies like USAID or the Canadian International Development Agency. This community is involved in international development studies (IDS). This is also a community that includes the operational staff and bureaucrats of the agencies and groups mentioned above, who are focused on implementing the academic research in short- and long-term projects and programmes.
4. Thus conversions from indigenous religion to Mormonism is understood as pro-development (see Stark 2005).
5. This account was provided to me by Nirmal Kumar Sethi, who is currently the President of the SBDM. N.K. Sethi is highly involved in the maintenance of the Digamber Jain community, as the chief

patron of the Bhagwan Mahavir Memorial Samiti of New Delhi and the managing trustee of three trusts.

6. Within the philosophical and historical context of *anekāntavāda*, this is a purely polemical and apologetic argumentative device. As John Cort rightly notes, "the Jains developed the doctrine of *anekāntavāda* as they sought to defend their conjoined definitions of the soul, karmic bondage, and the path to liberation from the criticisms of non-Jain logicians that the Jain position was untenable. They did not develop the doctrine as an extension of the ethical injunction of ahiṃsā" (2000, 330). The genius and aggressiveness of *Umāsvāti* and *Siddhasena's anekāntavāda* resides in the claims about naya and pramāna, where a claim's insufficiency to describe its standpoint becomes a challenge to do so. When Buddhists or Vedantins took up this challenge, they find their theories reduced to either 'impermanence' or 'permanence' alone, which the Jains then attack as not only insufficient but absolutist. The path to liberation outlined by *Umāsavāti* in the *Tattvārtha Sutra* is not a partial viewpoint, but what is considered to be the truth full-stop. The fundamental and eternal truths of soul, matter, karmic processes and liberation are outlined as determinative truth claims that flow from *pramāna*. Were this not the case, then it would be impossible to claim that there is *mithyādarśāna* or *mithyātva*, or further, that there are *karmas* that obscure the jiva's correct perception, or that the jiva is capable of a perception that is 'correct'. If the Jain doctrine really did entail relativism, then there would be no teaching about *darshāna-mohaniya karma*, which is the *karma* of indiscriminate openness to ideas (Cort 2000, 334).

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9

A Century of Boarding Houses under Dakshin Bharat Jain Sabha

Padmaja A. Patil

The Jain community is one of the very ancient communities in India and from hoary antiquity to the present day it has scattered throughout the length and breadth of India. Though the Jains constitute a small minority they have contributed a great deal to the development of art and architecture, logic and philosophy, language and literature, education and learning, charitable and public institutions and political, material and spiritual welfare of the people of different regions of India. Though the Jains have reached the nooks and corners of the entire country the maximum population is concentrated in Western India mainly in the Districts of Kolhapur, Sangli, Solapur, Satara, Belgaum, Dharwad which fall in the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Nineteenth Century was the period of Socio-religious renaissance emanating from and reformist movements active all over India, *Brahmo Samaj* (1828), *Prarthana Samaj* (1867), *Satya Shodhak Samaj* (1873), *Arya Samaj* (1875), were the organizations which were doing pioneezing work for upbringing the social, educational and religious status of the masses. In the same way educated elites in Jain community in South and North India established *Bharat Varsha Digamber Jain Sabha, Mathura Prantik Digamber Jain Sabha,* Bombay, weekely 'Jainbodhak' by Hirachand Nemchand Doshi at Solapur. To implement and bring into practice the work and suggestions of these institutions, *Dakshin Bharat Jain Sabha* (DBJS) was established on 3rd April 1899 for the socio-religious and educational development of Jains in South India. Accordingly, it stated Boarding Houses for facilitating students to take education and make educational development of Jain (Sangave: 1976:27-30). Present paper is divided into three parts. First part gives

introduction about the establishment of D.B.J.S., sources and Methodology adopted etc. Second part deals with establishment of boarding houses and their management, third part is devoted to conclusions of the paper.

Sources and Methodology

The Reasearch paper is based on primary sources including proceedings, books, published and unpublished reports and Souveniers of the Jain Boarding Houses, back issues of *Pragati* and *Jinvijay*, correspondence of leaders of D.B.J.S., Kolhapur State Archives, *Hujur Tharavs* books and Administrative Reports of Kolhapur State, unpublished Ph.D. Theses & M. Phil. Dissertations, in Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

Historical method is used for this paper and in order to maintain strict objectivity, all kinds of internal and external criticism of various documents were done whenever necessary. Interview method or oral history method is also used in which important personages associated with D.B.J.S. as well as its present and past office bearers have been interviewed.

Establishment of Dakshin Bharat Jain Sabha

The leaders from the Jain Community in Kolhapur area decided to establish an organization for the socio-educational and socio-religious progress of Jains in South India. A meeting on 3rd April 1899, held at Stavanidhi near Nipani in Karnataka state proved to be the dawn of awareness of the need for the social educational, religious upliftment of the Jains of South India (Patil: 2006:72). The Jain Community which once enjoyed supremacy in religious, literacy, economic prosperity in the antiquity, had nearly lost its identity during medieval period. The Deccan Jains were quite backward in religious, social and political arenas, the prime reason for which was the lack of contemporary education and tendency of orthodoxy towards the antiquated traditions and customs. This situation continued to prevail till the 19th Century. With the arrival of the British Raj, a few English educated Jain youths began earnest efforts to modernize the Jain community to make it compatible with the changing times (Sangave: 1976:30).

Objectives of the Dakshin Bharat Jain Sabha

Annasaheb Latthe with his friend Anna Chougale played an important role in the foundation meeting of Dakshin Maharashtra

Jain Sabha, and became head of education department. The main objectives of the Sabha were 1) The spread of education , collection of funds for education and effective use these of, adoption of some necessary methods for imparting education, 2) Inculcating the need of for social and religious progressiveness on the minds of the Jain community, 3) To find out ways and means for women's education in Jain community, 4) To Achieve these objectives, some movable and immovable property should be accrued to the Sabha with legal authority over the property (Constitution of D.B.J.S., 1907, 1963,1982). After three years of its establishment D.B.J.S. started a Jain Boarding House (1902) at Kolhapur followed by a series of boarding houses in Maharashtra and Karnataka in 20th Century.

Chh. Shahu Maharaj and Establishment of Boarding Houses at Kolhapur

Chh. Shahu (1894-1922) ruler of Kolhapur Princely State started Hostel Movement which was a unique phenomenon in the State for the upliftment of the masses. Of the various successful measures adopted by him for development of education, Hostel movement was a remarkable feature of his educational policy. On one occasion Chh. Shahu himself stated with pride that, "With a just sense of pride the British people called the British Parliament the Mother of Parliaments. In the same way Kolhapur has, I venture to say, deservedly come to be called the 'Mother of Students Boarding Houses.' There are Boarding Houses of Marathas, Jains, Lingayats, Saraswats, Mohamedans, Daivadny, Panchal, Simpi, Kayashtas etc. (Yedekar: 1972, P: 51). In this way some 23 Hostels came up in Kolhapur for the various castes from 1901 to 1921 (Khane: 1978:82-202).

As a part of his Hostel Movement Shri. Shahu Maharaj also helped in the establishment of Jain Boarding House at Kolhapur under the leadership of Shri Latthe (1878-1950). He was an eminent educationist-cum-social reformer among Jains and worked for the benefit of Jain Students and community taking inspirations and ideas from Kolhapur Hostel Movement (Patil: 1986: 429).

Boarding Houses: An Instrument of Educational Progress and Socio Cultural Change

It is to the credit of D.B.J.S., that by establishing hostels for boys and Shravikashrams for girls sabha brought about an

educational revolution in the Jain Community. Annasaheb Latthe inspired Jain social workers for this purpose. The various Boarding Houses, started by D.B.J.S., in today's Maharashtra and Karnataka states are as follows. (Patil: 2006: 117-180)

Boarding Houses for Boys

- Digamber Jain Boarding House, Kolhapur (1902).
- Digamber Jain Boarding House, Hubli (1909)
- Manikbag Digamber Jain Boarding, Belgaum (1915)
- R.d. Davda Digamber, Jain Boarding House, Sangli (1922)
- Jain Boarding House, Inchalkaranji (1986)
- Digamber Jain Boaarding House, Beed (1997)
- S.s.bhirdi, Jain Boarding House, Jaysingapur. (1996-1998)
- Devrukh Jain Boarding House, Devrukh (1982-1983)
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Jain Boarding of Kolhapur (1902) The Jain Boarding house at Kolhapur, was established in April 1902, but there were no hostel buildings for students; so they stayed in a Jain temple which was not at all suitable for the purpose (R.A.K.S.: 1895-1906: p-57). In 1904, Chh. Shahu paid visit to Hirachand Gumanji, Jain Barding of Bombay. He suggested to Manikchand, Sheth that the Jain community, was quite large in Kolhapur state but it was backward, in education, and therefore, to enable the Jains to receive higher education he (Sheth Manikchand) should construct one boarding house at Kolhapur, and offered necessary help to them from his side (P & J 30th Dec.1963; Sangave: 1976:73). This Incident greatly inspired the students like Lathe and Chougale studying in the Hostel. They took active part in the establishment of Jain Boarding at Kolhapur.

Shri Latthe and Nitve Shastri wrote a letter to Sheth Manikachand Hirachand Javeri, reminding him of Chh. Shahu's request and urging on him to visit Kolhapur. Sheth visited Kolhapur towards the end of 1904, and come in close contact with Chh. Shahu and workers of D.M.J.S. He promised them to construct a building suitable for 100 students. Chh. Shahu donated the 'Chouphala Mal' (Place of Nishidis of Jain Sadhus) for construction of building for Jain Boarding.

The Inauguration ceremony of the building was held on 9th

August, 1905, at the hands of Chh. Shahu Maharaj. On this occasion Mr. Latthe the Minister of Education Dept. of D.M.J.S. while stating importance of the Jain Boarding said, "Till now the Jains have constructed many buildings and temples all over the country. But at this place, that is, the Hostel building, the minds of our young men will be prepared to experience human greatness taught by the Jain religion; from the place, will go out promising doctors, lawyer, engineers, and statesmen and also efficient merchants, diligent farmers. We have every hope that thro' their efforts, we will bring back the golden days of our ancient past" (Sangave: 1976:98-105). Chh. Shahu gave an inaugural address and said, "I listened with great attention to your interesting address and felt particularly gratified by your remark that from here we might send forth not only promising doctors, lawyers, engineers and statesmen but talented merchants and skilled agriculturists, who will carry forward to coming ages the hitherto interrupted annals of ancient times with fresh vigor. Now a days you need help from us like other backward communities, but as soon as you are able to stand on your own legs and with all my heart, I wish you success in your endeavors to do so".

The first boarding house started at Kolhapur became the stepping stone for series of Boarding Houses and *Shravikashrams* under D.B.J.S. in the 20th Century.

Table 9.1: Faculty wise Strength chart during the year 1983-84 (Records of all Boarding Branch 1983-84)

Sl. no.	Boarding Branch	Kolhapur	Sangli	Belgaum	Hubli	Total
1	Medical	5	6	29	-	40
2	Engineering	13	7	11	2	33
3	Diploma	35	8	14	1	58
4	Agriculture	5	-	-	-	5
5	Science	54	10	5	54	123
6	Commerce	72	9	5	32	118
7	Arts	34	2	24	45	105
8	High-school	23	1	1	14	39

Sl. no.	Boarding Branch	Kolhapur	Sangli	Belgaum	Hubli	Total
9	Law	8	5	-	6	19
10	Courses	1	3	-	2	6
	Total	**250**	**51**	**89**	**156**	**546**

Table 9.2: Faculty wise Strength chart:
(Records of all Boarding Branch 1919 to 2000) Faculty Wise Strength chart during the year (1919-1920)

Sl.	Boarding Branch	Kolha-pur	Hubli	Belgaum	Sangli	Pune	Total
1	Inter	1	-	-	3	-	4
2	Previous	2	-	-	3	4	9
3	Metric	11	3	3	3	11	31
4	English VI	5	7	-	3	7	22
5	English V	4	1	3	5	4	16
6	English IV	12	6	5	1	8	22
7	English III	3	2	4	5	10	24
8	English II	1	6	7	12	5	41
9	English I	4	5	6	10	1	26
10	Technical					1	1
11	Marathi VII	4	-	-	-	-	4
12	Marathi VI	1	-	-	-	-	1
13	Marathi V	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Total	**48**	**30**	**25**	**45**	**51**	**199**

Table 9.3: STRENGTH OF BOARDING HOUSES, FROM 1919 TO 2000. (Reports of Dakshin Bharat Jain Sabha, 1919 to 2000)

Year, Boarding House	Kolhapur	Hubli	Belgaum	Sangli	Pune	Total Strength
1919-1920	48	30	25	45	51	199
1983-1984	250	51	89	156	-	546
1993-1994	214	100	100	230		644
1999-2000	275	163	176	262		876
						=2265

The growth of figures shown in the chart clearly indicates the contribution of the boarding houses towards the spread of

education among Jain community. Another noteworthy aspect is that the Boarding Houses and *Shravikashrams* started by D.B.J.S. became the hearts of educational development of the Jain community. As of today these Boarding Houses with their vast expansion of land have become centres of educational, social and cultural activities in the Jain community in South India. All these boarding Houses are now in the heart of the main cities mentioned above and therefore by today's standard they are worth crores in terms of property. Because of the well planed systems the wealth generated by these centres through commercial complexes will help educational upliftment of the rural Jain community for generations to come.

Management of Boarding Houses

As per the Constitution (1907 &1963) of D.B.J.S., President was responsible for the work of the Sabha and under his guidance all committees were working. The Chairman is an important figure in all the activities and indirect head of D.B.J.S. A man who was from many years actively associated with the work of D.B.J.S. was selected as a Chairman. Treasurer was head of economic activities of the sabha and all boarding Houses are under his control for financial activities. Regional section of sabha has independent Mahamantri who looked after affairs of Boarding Houses in his regions like Pune, Belgaum, Hubli, Mumbai, Aurangabad and Kolhapur.

Every Boarding House has a superintendent who was responsible for daily routine of the Boarding House like discipline, office work, problems of students, financial management, correspondence, building and related activities. Every Boarding House had a chairman and a Secretary from local social workers of Sabha. Kolhapur boarding house has long tradition of eminent superintendents like Annasaheb Latte (1905-1914), Bhaskararao Jadhav (1920-21), Dr. A.N. Upadhye (1946-48), Prin., G.K. Patil (1976-77), D.A. Patil (1986-1997) etc. Kolhapur and Hubli Boarding Houses had celebrated their centenaries very successfully.

Management is organizing monthly meetings for maintaining the discipline in Boarding House. Management, religious education, earn and learn scheme, mess, gymnasium, library are under the control of student committee and superintendent of Boarding Houses. The social and cultural activities of boarding houses include

monetary and other help to the needy, kike flood affected people. Many students are involved in the activities include annual Paruyushan Parva, Lord Mahaveer's anniversary, Vijaya Dashami celebrations, annual gathering, lectures for personality development of the students, annual sport meets, career guidance and counseling, inter college elocution contests, slide shows on social issues etc.

Financial Asistance, Educational Fund & Scholarships

Financial Assistance – D.B.J.S. and Boarding Houses were maintained by the financial assistance of the well to do people and on the amount of interest derived from funds voluntarily subscribed by the rich persons in Jain Community. In 1905-1906, Rs. 1, 75,000/-. Were collected as a fund and Chh. Of Kolhapur gave grant of Rs 300/-. Per annum to institution, (R.A.K.S., 1905-1906, p-57), up to merger of Kolhapur state. The Workers of the Sabha used to go from house to house explaining the aim of the Sabha and appealing to the people for giving help to education fund. For this purpose a novel idea was worked out, in initial stage. The donor declare donation but keep money with him as 'Sabha's deposit and pay interest on that per year at a fixed rate. (Jain Mitra 4th Year, 8th Issue, 1903:12).

Also collection of 'corn fund' and 'Paisa fund' was implemented by the students of Boarding Houses. For this selected students arranged tours to different villages. They gave lectures on the Jain religion and collected food grains and money from farmers for their Education (Sangave: 1976: 91-92). Through this programme, a student, Bhau Paygonda Patil (Karmaveer Bahurao Patil) developed himself and established the Rayat Shikshan Sanstha at Satara in 1919. His was a revolution in the educational field of rural Maharashtra. 'Earn and lear scheme' implemented in these hostels was also a unique feature at that time. Afterwards this was used by K. Bhaurao Patil as a special feature of Rayat Shikshan Sanstha Satara and has now become key word in every university of Maharashtra for the education of poor students, the workers of sabha collected funds for students by visiting door to door in every village and the process is still in practice.

Scholarships: From the inception of the Boarding Houses Scholarships are provided to the needy students. After the completion of their education they have to pay all money back to

the Sabha after they started earning. Students can use the money without any interest up to their earning. This provision enabled poor and village students to stay at the cities and complete the Higher Education. From 1921-1975, 5 Lakhs were used by rotation scholarship fund. In 1975, it was moved from 5 to 16 lakhs of Rupees.

Conclusion

The Boarding Houses started by D.B.J.S. provide shelters to poor boys and girls in Jain Community.

(1) Some Hostels are closed because of unavoidable circumstances. Among Boarding Houses at two Jaysingapur and Devarukh were closed, mainly because of lack of local leaders free service and sufficient financial assistance from local community.

(2) Central administration is a unique feature.

(3) Local management is changing after every three years.

(4) After independence because of state governments policy private, medical engineering and other colleges were developed with their hostels in campus. So students preffered them to Jain boarding Houses.

(5) These Boarding Houses many times provided shelteres to freedom fighters during freedom movement and helped national cause, e.g. Nagnath Annan Nayakwadi.

(6) With a view to inculcate discipline and good behaviour in the students of boarding houses superintendent and the local authorities of Boarding Houses have made rules and regulations.

(7) After the establishment of Veer Seva Dal (1979) a young front for social service of D.B.J.S., boarding houses became the centres of their activities and past students from Boarding Houses provided help to 'Panchkalyan pooja' all over India. Help to flood affected people was provided through visits from house to house, Blood donation camps, Alumini Association, free food supply centre, a mess, tree plantation, Anti-addiction drive, yoga shibirs were arranged.

(8) These boarding houses are arranging programs of Mahavir Jayanti, Paryushan Parva, and lecture series on various topics for personal development of students. Yearly tournaments, U.P.S.C and M.P.S.C. exam training camps, yearly gatherings, intercollegiate elocution, competitions, computers centres, etc.

(9) After 1980 purposeful Boarding houses were started in Marathawada area, for brining together and developing the scattered Jain community in Marathawada.

(10) Tha aim of D.B.J.S. was to educate the needy poor Jains students from rural areas which were fulfilled. Today we find jain doctors, engineers, trained farmers, industrialist in villages who were past students of Jain boarding houses. It was really a revolution in rural Jain community.

(11) Now a day the management of boarding houses is hampered some times because of lack of social workers and good leadership. Any status in the management of boarding houses was without any financial gain. So many workers are doing this work after retirement. Some past students from the boarding houses served in Rayat Shikshan Sansthan and and Swami Vivekanand Shikshan Sanstha. And developed the new horizon for rural community.

(12) Every Boarding house has library, Temple, gymnasium, mess, auditotium etc which provide overall development and personality, of students.

(13) From 1902 to 2010 the tradition of free service to boardings continuous to be maintained by workers of Sabha, maintaining side by side their jobs and business.

(14) Now a day all boarding Houses maintained by D.B.J.S. were famous for a good behaviours, Co-operative attitude, social service and academic development of society.

(15) All Boarding houses have temple, so many Jain people are attached with it. So the Boarding Houses are the centres of Soci-cultural activities of Jain community.

While concluding the paper it can humbly be said that the hope expressed by Chh. Shahu during inaugural ceremony of the first boarding House at Kolhapur has now been partially fulfilled, if not fully by D.B.J.S. thro' its contribution to the educational advancement of the Jain community.

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10

Sallekhana-Santhārā : Jain Voluntary Death as a Model for Secular and End-of-Life Care

Sean Hillman

Every human must not only die, but they must also stop eating, drinking and moving at some point before death. Except for instances of instantaneous traumatic death, from injury or sudden catastrophic failure of a crucial organ such as bleeding in the brain, there is usually sometime between the stoppage of oral intake and physical movement and the absence of vital signs. After this moment of measurable clinical death of the body, some feel that there is even more time after physical death during which some metaphysical events occur. Regardless of differences in view, and however long this time is: it is an important time. It is the time closest to death. Even if it is a short-period of time, lasting only hours, minutes or mere moments, it is the last period of time in life where these particular body-oriented concerns cease. Some become unable to engage in oral-intake or ambulation, and some consciously choose to stop these activities. One can ask: What influence do we have on bringing this time about? When it arrives, what are we to do with this time? If we have some influence over its arrival, and have a range of choices on how to utilize this time, how do we go about making it maximally useful and beneficial for both the dying person, their caregivers and those close to the dying person?

The Jain religious tradition, based in India and historically around 2700 years old but claiming an eternal pre-history, pays great attention to the period of time between the stoppage of oral intake and activity and death. Both textually and in practice, through the ages and in modern times as well, properly preparing

for and engaging in this period of time is given special importance in Jainism. *Sallekhana*, ritual fasting until death, *Santhārā*, the death-bed, and *Samādhimaraṇa*, end-practices aimed at entering the death experience with equanimity, are seen as complementary elements for the most perfect way to end life. In this voluntary and controlled death practice which moves one towards a peaceful end, there are many external and internal aspects, such as fasting and the reduction of the desire for food. There are also supplementary purificatory practices which can be personal or interdependently engaged in with other members of the lay or monastic community. Combined, these enhance the quality of the end of life which will, in turn, determine the quality of what comes *after* death: a being's next life upon rebirth.

In palliative care, be it that taking place in the home, hospital, homes for the aged, or in hospice, each stage the dying person goes through has been analysed thoroughly from various multi-disciplinary perspectives, such as nursing, ethics and medicine. Thoroughly, but not exhaustively. Despite this engagement in analysis of the phases in the care of the dying, in a way the tradition of palliative care is very young. If we look outside of India, such as in the practice of palliative care in North America and Europe, there obviously is a long history and pre-history of caring for the dying, but a systemic process of such is new in the scheme of things. Due to the constant development and implementation of new technologies to address disease and decay, there is a perpetual need to renew the dialogues and debates around their usage. A ventilator, for instance, can be used with good effect to help maintain blood oxygenation in a young person recovering from a motor-vehicle accident if they require deep sedation that supresses respiration. If recovery is within the realm of possibility, arguing against usage of the device in this case would be weak and suspect. On the other hand, such a device can also be used to extend physical life artificially, long after brain-death. If the potential for recovery is low, arguing against its usage becomes stronger and more justified. Various debates such as these over the usage of ventilators are only as old as the technology itself, but they are guided by social justice principles that we find in bioethics, such as equality of opportunity and autonomy, which have a lengthier history. Likewise, the age-old principles in Jain voluntary death practice can help guide contemporary Jain practitioners who find themselves in a world

with technologies and issues unique to our time. Despite the fact that the Jain approach to death is based on a religious perspective, and that palliative care in general is secularized, I propose that the age-old and systematized approach to death preparation in the Jain tradition can be influential in palliative care. There is the expectation in palliative care delivery of sensitivity towards, and accomodation of, the multifarious perspectives of the dying and the bereaved - including those perspectives which are religious. This built-in flexibility make palliative care amenable to influence. This is not to say that the Jain voluntary death practice model can be potentially influential merely by transferring certain components into a palliative context, although this might be possible. I will consciously look to see if there are any unique elements in the Jain death principles and practices, and not spend much energy emphasizing parallels between the Jain way of dying and that of the palliative care as some elements in the Jain way of dying may bear nominal resemblance to those palliative care, such as the pursuit of a 'peaceful death', but are descriptive of a much more subtle experience in Jainism. Some elements, also, will be potentially helpful or transferable dependant on the view of the dying person with regard to the continuity of existence after death in general, or that of karma, purification and rebirth in particular. Some elements can potentially be helpful and transferable independent of view, such as those which can bring about immediate benefit. Some aspects of both the Jain and palliative care approaches must also be problematized, and in so doing, will highlight areas of strength and those needing improvement in palliative care.

I will begin by briefly outlining what I find to be some essential components to Jain voluntary death practice, to set the stage for an interaction between the Jain and palliative approaches. This will include death in Jain thought and fasting and austerities in Jain practice. Next, I will look at the stoppage or oral intake and activity in palliative care. Lastly, and the main concern of this study, I will look at the aspects of Jain death-practice which are amenable to, or problematic in, a secular palliative care setting. In this, the first in a series of papers addressing the interaction between Jain voluntary death and palliative care, I have focused on *choice* and have subdivided the issue into a) Personal Choice, b) Imminency of Death and Quality of life, c) Seeking/Gaining Permission from a Preceptor and receiving assistance, and d) Capacity, autonomy, physician and family.

Death in Jain Thought

Although there are those that choose death with the thought that they will use this route as a way out of the pain of life, death itself must be a painful process. This is the reason why pain management is one of the main concerns in palliative care. It may be distasteful to start out by pointing to death as a suffering, but in the search for improving the experience of death and dying, we need to start here. When the sight and topic of death is made taboo and hidden, it seems to be based, in part, on the fear of this pain. As a caregiver, at the bedside I mostly hear about pain from my patients. It is the first question asked to patients by nurses and physicians, and the word "pain" is even one of the essential words to learn in non-English languages to ensure that the pain management of patients with language barriers can be properly determined. It would be fascinating to compare pain management between cultural contexts. Those in which death is hidden away, as we do in Canada where people die privately at home or in an institution, and those in which death is more publicly displayed, such as it is around the River Ganga cremation ghats of Varanasi, India. It would not surprises me if statistically people complain less of pain control problems in places where death is incorporated more into public life. Familiarity with death can only reduce the fear of it, and the physical and mental disturbances that come along with dying can be more easily confronted when fear is minimal. Next to the fear of pain, it seems that the fear of annihilation also figures large in the avoidance of death.

We might expect from a system that accepts transmigration that the pain of death might have something to do with the separation of that which moves to the next rebirth, the 'soul' or *ātman* in Jainism, from the body. To be sure, "...death is defined as the destruction or termination of the mode of human or other state of birth...",[1] with which comes the pain of life ending. It is difficult, however, to find mention of the pain associated with the *shift* from one birth to another. Perhaps textual focus remains on one birth or another, and not the transition between them, due to the Jain view of rebirth being an instantaneous process without any intermediate experience. The ending of life is associated with final elemental decay. In the Painnayam, the "...last moment of earthly life...[is] when the atoms disintegrate..."[2] . Even more dramatic, sometimes

"[t]he Jains define death as the blowing up (*samudghāta*) of the atoms of life..."[3] Since death is described as a time of destruction, explosive even, it provides the impetus for the development of means in Jain practice to prepare physically and psychically to meet this difficult experience in the best way possible. The difficulty of death is one reason for the existence and importance of the Jain voluntary death practices such as *Sallekhana* ("emaciation of body and of passions through external and internal penances ",[4] and *Samādhimaraṇa* (end practices for death in equanimity).

Another reason for Jain voluntary death practices is because the quality of death is the cause of the quality of the experience after death, which can be another birth or even potentially liberation. I will look more closely at this in the section on the outcomes of Jain voluntary death practice. For now it can be said that, because death is the cause what comes after, death is sub-divided into various qualitative levels based on commensurate levels of the state of mind of the dying person. The quality of the death, dependent on mental qualities, is measured by the spiritual realizations attained from the progressive mastering of restrained conduct. The list is sometimes compressed into two types, or three, and both the *Bhagavatī Ārādhanā* and *Uttarādhyayana-Nīryakti* enumerate and describe seventeen types of death.[5] Jnānamatī gives a middling-length list which shows *"death ha[ving] five varieties*:

(1) *Extreme Prudent's Death* (*Pandita-pandita Maraṇa*)
(2) *Prudent's Death* (*Pandita Maraṇa*)
(3) *Fool-Prudent's Death* (*Bāla-pandita Maraṇa*)
(4) *Fool's Death* (*Bāla Maraṇa*)
(5) *Extreme Fool's Death* (*Bāla bāla Maraṇa*)"[6]

It is noteworthy that the worst type of death is described as "[t]he death of a wrong-faithed living beings and death by suicide and accident etc."[7] It will be difficult for this subdivision to be influential outside of the Jain sphere if by "wrong-faith" it is meant any system other than Jainism. It would be milder if the 'faith' being referred to is in relation to the workings of reality, or something similarly universal so as to recognize the potentiality for non-Jains to have a better death. Additionally, associating a death by 'accident' with foolishness can be problematic. In terms of immediate causes, an accident does not necessarily happen from foolishness such as in the case of an 'innocent bystander' hit by a

drunk-driver. Perhaps the foolishness here is not referring to a present immediate cause, but from past foolish actions, even from past lives, that have the accident as their result. The word accident has very recently been shunned in trauma medicine in favour of terms such as 'collision' to remove the insinuation of causelessness of events, in that 'there are no accidents.' In considering death practices, what is most relevant is that a sudden death necessarily prevents activities that are done imminently before death. It also points towards the importance of constant preparation for death. Given the problem with associating poor deaths with suddenness, it is important to make explicit the two-fold, "...a fool's (*bāla*) way of dying and a wise man's (*pandita*) manner of death..."[8] and three-fold subdividing of death, which adds "a third category in between...[in which] the semi-wise death (*bāla-p[andita]*) comes to the layman who is befallen by him unexpectedly and suddenly, without any preceding fasting, but after having confessed and on a death-bed recognized as such."[9] There being at least a moment of consciousness, in the middle-ground between the two extreme types of death, the most and least preferable, there is an opportunity to improve one's death by way of a purificatory practice supplementary to the fasting and immobility austerities.

After defining death and qualifying different types of death, death and impermanence are also object of contemplation used with the aim of inspiring the practitioner to extract the essence from life by giving up on activities that waste precious time by distracting one towards the material world. We find an example of this type of reasoning in the *Ācārānga Sūtra* which "is the first of the eleven Angas",[10] the most primary and presumably the oldest collection of scripture in the Jain Canon, although the first to translate the *Ācārānga Sūtra,* Jacobi, "established that the canon was recited... [not] in a single period."[11] The *Ācārānga Sūtra,* is mainly concerned with conduct (*Ācārā*), being 'the law book for Jaina monks and nuns.'[12] Here we have a recommendation on how to use the subject of death as a means to not be misled by the transient, as quoted from Mahāvīra, the most recent *Tīrthankara* ("Ford-Maker," "Congregation Gatherer" or a liberated founder of the Jain religion) in the Jain cosmic time-cycle:

> *"Thus spake the hero:..the clever one should have done with carelessness by considering death in tranquillity,*

and that, the nature of which is decay (viz. The body);
these (pleasures), look! will not satisfy (thee).
Therefore have done with them!"[13]

Sometimes, too, death as an object of contemplation can serve different purposes even within the same verse, as we find here, also from the *Ācārānga Sūtra*:

"That man will be liberated from death; he is
a sage who sees the danger (f: arising from worldliness),
knowing the highest good in this world, leading a circumspect
life, calm, guarded, endowed (with knowledge, &c.), always
restrained, longing for death, he should lead a
religious life. Manifold, indeed, appear sinful
actions; therefore prove constant to truth! Delighting
in it, a wise man destroys all karman."[14]

In its first appearance in this verse, death serves not as a motivator for good conduct by its looming potential to end the practitioner's efforts towards the goal of liberation, but as a problem to be transcended by way of good conduct. Next, death is presented as something to be wished for. If by 'death' here the composer meant death of the highest quality, that one would hope to have the type of death that would be most conducive to furthering one's spiritual development, its meaning would not contradict other statements in the *Ācārānga Sūtra* itself that warn *against* longing for death.[15] The language here does not support this, as the word death here is unqualified, and might be an indication that the composer(s) of the chapters concerning death practices per se are this verse are different, which would be in accord with Jacobi's suggestion of the *Angas'* shared authorship.[16]

Fasting (*anaśana*) and Austerities (*tapa*) in Jainism

Austerities, particularly fasting, are a crucial part of understanding Jain voluntary death practice. Generally, we can categorize fasts into three types: instrumental, protestation, and liberative. The first would be those aimed at a specific worldly end such as the acquisition of material goods, relationships or various boons which can include supernatural powers. The second would be those associated with social activism, and the last would be, for our purposes here, concerned with karma.

In a conversation with a 20-something female college student

in Moradabad, India, I was told of two types of what we may call instrumental fasting practised nowadays. Without prompting nor religious context (I am unaware of her background), she freely told me that she was fasting that day and further of her personal practice of fasting on Mondays, avoiding everything but water, in order specifically to gain a good husband. She then told me also that people who have financial difficulties fast on Fridays. There are also textual examples of instrumental fasting for gain, such as "[t]he *Manu Smrti* [which] mentions some traditional methods of fasting unto death in order to get back the loan that was once given. (The *Manu Smrti*, VIII. 49.)"[17] The *Mahābhārāta* is full of examples of ascetics engaging in lengthy fasting to be granted boons in the form of special abilities from the gods.

As with instrumental fasting, there are many modern and historical examples of fasting in protest. There have been many 'fast unto death' events in India in recent times, particularly in New Delhi and Dharamsala, where Tibetans protest the Chinese occupation of Tibet. These usually end with forced hospitalization and arrest. Although empathetic to the cause, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has stated on many occasions that such fasting unto death in protest is a form of violence towards the body. Mahātma Gandhi-ji also engaged in fasts that were usually to protest violence between factions, which all ended with resolution. Textually we find occurrences of fasting in protest as well. "The *Rajatarangini* refers to...Brahmins resorting to fast[ing] in order to obtain justice or protest against ...abuses."[18]

These forms of fasting, instrumental and protestation, are rejected in Jain thought and practice. "[F]orms of instrumental fasting (*vrata*) are invariably criticized by the Jains..",[19] and it is also felt that "[f]asting unto death for specific purposes has an element of coercion which is against the spirit of non-violence."[20] They are distinguished as inappropriate types of fasting because they keep one "...caught in the wheel of *Samsāra*...",[21] rather than being a cause of liberation from the cycle of existence.

Jain austerities, on the other hand, are aimed only towards liberation and are mainly concerned with karma. On a lower level, austerities make for the accumulation of merit (*puṇya*) which brings about good results. We have seen that some of the good results, such as material gain, can be counterproductive on the the path to

liberation. They can, however, be useful. Consider the good result of having resources, and using such to support religious organizations. A commentary to Āchārya Amitagati's *Yogasā Raprābhrta* states that such actions "may bring some good (*śuba*) but not spiritual purity (*śuddhi*)."[22] Merit is good, but still obstructs liberation. On a higher level, austerities are for the purpose of stopping the influx of *all* karma, positive and negative, and for destroying karma already bonded. When considering Jain voluntary death practices, I refer to austerities rather than merely fasting because the limiting of mobility is another austerity which appears as a major feature when Jains are dying. Both fasting and mobility-restricting austerities fall under the category of "[*k*]*āyakleśa* [which] literally means to give turmoil to the body."[23] There is a foil to physical austerity, however, provided by a more recent text: the *Samaṇ Sutta*. This poetic compilation was arranged and agreed upon by an assembly of Jain representatives in 1974, on the 2500th anniversary of the nirvana of Bhagawan Mahāvīra. In the section on the "Path of Liberation...[the first of the] Precepts on Passionless Deaths (*Samlekhanasťa*) [is:] ...He who has an eye on his upward journey (liberation) should not think of the external objects (i.e., wordly pleasures): he should protect his body for annihilating the past karmas."[24] At first glance, it would seem that the protection of the body suggested here would oppose the hardship that comes with the *kāyakleśa*, or bodily turmoil, austerities. Perhaps it means to protect the body from activities other than those that destroy karma, and also to take care of the body for, without it, one cannot purify. This is supported by the fact that *kāyakleśa* is only one of "the twelve types of elimination of karma (*nirjarā*)."[25] Although three other *nirjarās* involve food restrictions, there are *nirjarās* which do not necessarily require bodily hardship, such as modesty and self-study. But bearing such physical hardships, although necessary, is not the only purpose in the practice of austerities. With fasting, "one has to win victory on hunger...as [e]very type of sin is the consequence of hunger..."[26] and, thus, fasting is considered to be the highest austerity. So much so that "...external tapas...consists mainly of various kinds of fasts....[and] as a matter of fact, as time went on, *tapas*, in disciplinary contexts, came to mean all the prescribed sorts of fasting."[27] Fasting is the first and foremost of the karma destroying *nirjarās*.

We could say that fasting is for eliminating existing karma and immobility is for the stoppage of the influx of new karma. This would be a very tidy way of showing why the practices are done concurrently in preparing for death, since both purposes are required for liberation from karmic bondage. However, the distinction is false, in a way. We have established that fasting eliminates karma, but since it is also refraining from bodily activity, it will logically aid in the prevention of the influx of new karma. This is supported by the fact that "of the five types of *samvara*Āc[the fifth is] *Ayoga* – stopping all the mental vocal, mental and bodily activities."[28] Likewise, even though immobility clearly acts to stop karmic influx by being the *samvara* of *ayoga*, it eliminates karma as well since *all* austerities eliminate karma: as "...there are innumerable kinds of penances (*tapa*)...so *nirjarā* may also be of innumerable types."[29] In this way, nirjarā and tapa are synonymous. Both fasting and immobility serve both purificatory functions of elimination and stoppage of karma.

Not only is there overlap in the function of fasting and immobility austerities, but there is overlap in their practice. First, among the fasts, "[t]here are two disctinctions of *anaśana* – (1) *Itwarika* (for specified period) and (2) *Yāvat-kathika* - life long or up to death."[30] Thus, as an unlimited fast, *Sallekhana* is of the second type. Next, are the fast types in death practice. The distinctions between them are not based on fasting itself, as is done in the sometimes lengthy preparations for *Sallekhana*, where over the course of up to twelve years one can not only reduce the amount of food one takes, but also gradually reduce certain tastes and the level of nutrition in foods. As they appear in the *Ācārānga Sūtra*, the distinctions between the three fasts are hard to decipher. After looking at other sources, particularly Caillat, the differences became clearer. The best way to distinguish the three types of fast unto death are with regard to mobility and assistance to oneself by oneself or others: 1) *bhatta-paccakkhāṇa*, in which one renounces food and drink, and can receive help from oneself or others; 2) *Itvara* or *iṅgiṇi-ṁaraṇa*, in which one renounces food and drink *and* limits physical movement, and can receive help from oneself; 3) *pāovagamaṇa*, in which one renounces food and drink *and* all motion, and receives no help from anyone (self or others). These fast types show how fasting and immobility can be practised together. Immobility types in death practice also are generally sub-divided

into three: taking certain postures to the exclusion of others, restriction motion to a certain limited area, and refraining from all bodily motion altogether. Thus, in the second type of fast, *ingiṇi-maraṇa*, the way physical movement can be limited is by either restricting one's posture or the area where one engages in motion.

Stoppage of Oral intake and Ambulation in Palliative Care

There are three main causes which lead people to stop oral intake and ambulation in a health care setting. The first is the requirement to stop such activities temporarily to prevent further deterioration of health and to allow for diagnostics and treatments that promote healing. An example of this is the admission of a trauma patient, such as a person who has fallen or who has been involved in a motor-vehicle collision. Since they may have a spinal, neck or head injury, they are treated with the assumption that they do have such an injury. They are strapped to a board and wear a supportive collar to prevent further damage. They also are prevented from having any food or liquid in the chance that they may go for surgery. This is to ensure that the stomach is as empty as possible, because there is the potential while under anaesthetic to aspirate and choke on any stomach contents that may rise up since the gag-reflex is suppressed by the sedation. In such cases, even if the patient does not want to comply with the restriction of oral intake and ambulation, they will be restrained physically or chemically against their will. The reasoning behind the overriding strength of the medical team's decision over that of the patient during certain traumas is that the patient's competancy to make a decision in their best interest might be compromised by such things as shock or the effects of the injury, such as bleeding in the brain.

The second cause leading people to stop oral intake and ambulation in a health care setting is debilitation. Arising from the infirmity of old age, or from the ravages of disease, both must occur to every person save those that have an instantaneous death. Often in old age, and as a result of many medical conditions such as a stroke, the triggering mechanism for swallowing is dysfunctional. Some hydration can be accomplished by way of intravenous but the first recourse for maintaining nutrition when this happens is the insertion of a tube into the stomach by way of the nose or mouth. If artificial feeding needs to continue beyond a certain length of time, a tube is inserted directly into the stomach to avoid skin

breakdown inside the nose and mouth. There are situations where a tube insertion is not an effective means to deliver nutrition, such as with a person who has stomach cancer and cannot digest normally. This might call for the use of total parenteral nutrition (TPN), which is the delivery of nutrition directly into the veins. I have only ever seen this treatment used in oncology and HIV/AIDS.

The Health Ethics Guide of the Catholic Health Association of Canada, which governs the principles of care of several Toronto hospitals such as St. Michael's (where I have worked as a bedside caregiver for more than 10 years) and St. Joseph's, states that

> *"[w]henever it is questionable whether a patient is able to receive adequate nourishment by mouth, the presumption should always be to provide nutrition and hydration by medical means. Artificial (medically provided) nutrition and hydration should be considered in all patient conditions of both an acute or chronic nature, for a short or long term duration.*
>
> *Artificial nutrition includes such interventions as intravenous fluids, nutrition by tube (nasogastric, gastrostomy, etc.) and total parenteral nutrition (TPN).*
>
> *Patients, substitute decision-makers, and healthcare providers are often confronted with difficult decisions concerning initiating or discontinuing artificially provided nutrition and hydration.*
>
> *Consistent with the mission and values of... [institutions governed by the Catholic Health Association of Canada], which are founded on respect for the dignity of the person and the sacredness of human life, we believe that life and health should be maintained and preserved. Nevertheless, the patient's personal and spiritual goals provide the context within which decisions about the appropriateness of treatments to foster life and health are made.*
>
> *Therefeore, there are circumstances, as with any other medical intervention, in which artificially provided nutrition and/or hydration may be withheld or withdrawn."*[31]

Here it is demonstrated that, according to the principles of Catholic Health Care Ethics, all available means are to be used in healthcare to provide nutrition and hydration in the support of health and life, and that decisions are guided by respect for life *and* the unique autonomy of each individual. Although arising from the ideology of religious group, there is nothing here that is particularly Catholic and not transferable to a secular context,

particularly given the explicit respect for autonomy. A Catholic health care institution would be unable to properly serve a diverse patient population without this. Doubtless, there *are* controversies surrounding Catholic health care ethics. For the most part they revolve around active euthanasia, abortion and same-sex relationships. When competency is assured, issues around nutrition and hydration and withdrawal of care are not overly problematic in either Catholic or secular health care ethics. When competency is difficult to establish, problems abound. A well-known example of this is the case of Terri Schiavo (Florida, USA). In 2003, the feeding tube of this "33 year old severely brain damaged woman was removed by court order after a 10 year legal battle between her husband and her parents.[32] We will look more closely at this in the upcoming section on choice.

I must mention that it is incredibly inspiring to me as an academic in religious studies and bioethics, and as a bedside caregiver, to see health care ethics from a religious organization successfully applied secularly for multi-cultural and multi-faith patient populations. I say 'successfully' not to deny the problems in doing so, and the problems are many, but to recognize the enormous amount of benefit Catholic hospitals bring to the sick, dying, the families of the sick and dying, and the disenfranchised. The practical and successful implementation of religiously-based health care ethics in helping the sick and dying provided the context allowing me to serve the sick and dying. The problems I have experienced, and struggle with first-hand, in the practical implementation of religiously-based health care ethics in hospital has directly caused me to enter more deeply into religious ethics and bioethics to find perspective and possible solutions. As a result of my parallel experiences as both a scholar of Indian religions and caregiver, I aim to gradually formulate a guide to health care ethics for those of Indian heritage and those who follow an Indian religion. Researching Jain voluntary death practice is one step towards actualizing this goal.

The third cause leading people to stop oral intake and ambulation in a health care setting is by choice. I can think of countless examples of this from among my former patients, but I will relate one that I did not experience directly, but rather was relayed to me and remains close to my heart. My mother's father had not been sick for very long before he died, but he was very

advanced in age. He was hospitalized and while she was at his bedside, he told her that he did not want to eat anymore and wanted to leave this life. He felt finished, and didn't want to be a burden on others by losing his ability to perform activities of daily living. He died very soon after this talk, while my mother held his hand. He had consciously made the choice to stop eating and drinking, which inevitably led also to immobility from the weakness arising from lack of nutrition.

The difference between nutrition and hydration in healthcare and palliative care is that in the first case it is pursued by any means unless futile or harmful, and in the latter it is pursued only for *comfort*, if at all.

Next, let us look closely at how the choice to engage in Jain voluntary death practices is arrived at, and if it is any way potentially influential in secular palliative care. This will be the first of two areas that we will isolate in Jain voluntary death practice to find amenities or problems when put beside palliative care death practices. The second will be the interdependence found in Jain voluntary death practice.

The Choice to Stop Oral intake and Motion in Jain and Palliative Death Practices

On our first day of classes for the 2010 season of the International Summer School for Jain Sudies (ISSJS) in India, during a conversation over lunch in our Delhi enclave with one of our professors, Dr. R.P. Jain, I was told that to engage in *Sallekhana* one needs permission from a teacher, and that the entire Jain community, monastic and lay, is involved in the process. I was struck by this. That fateful conversation has steered the research for this paper since then, as I find these two aspects, choice and interdependence, the most exciting and problematic areas in Jain and Palliative death practice. This is just the beginning of a more lengthy and involved exploration on my part of countless aspects of Jain voluntary death practice that deserve more attention, such as: the signs of death, the subtleties of the process of death itself, preparation, intention, the purpose and outcome, environment, adjunct practices, the people left behind, historical and modern examples of *Sallekhana*, innapropriate death (the problem of killing in suicide and active euthanasia), entering death in meditation in Jainism and Buddhism and so on. Jain voluntary death practice is a truly vast area of study.

A Personal Choice

It is a crucial point that in Jain voluntary death practice the taking of death vows is not suggested or encouraged by others but chosen by oneself. This non-coercive decision is followed by a request to a qualified teacher to engage in the practice, and a subsequent permission or denial. We will look at these two processes separately.

What leads a person to want to engage in Jain voluntary death practice? Most sources repeat the same main justifiable reasons for starting a fast unto death: old age, sickness, calamity or famine. We could include any number of situations under 'calamity,' such as environmental disasters, mortal injury and so on. "*Ācārya Samantabhadra* [states] in his authoritative work entitled *Ratanakaraṇda-śrāvakāchāra*..."When overtaken by a calamity, by famine, by old age, or by an incurable disease, to get rid of the body for *'dharma'* is called *'Sallekhana.'* One should by degrees...quit the body".[33] The crux of the matter is that these instances have in common the potential to leave a person unable to perform their religious duties, also often mentioned in Jain texts. The *Ācārānga Sūtra* says this:

> *"If this thought occurs to a monk:*
> *'I am sick and not able, at this time, to regularly mortify the flesh,'*
> *that monk should regularly reduce his food;*
> *regularly reducing his food, and diminishing his sins,*
> *'he should take proper care of his body,*
> *being immovable like a beam; exerting himself he dissolves his body."*
> Book 1, Lecture 7, Lesson 6, Verse 3[34]

Entrance into Jain voluntary death practices is considered, therefore, when religious duties are no longer able to be performed and when death approaches. This is to prevent the influx of negative karma from breaking commitments, which occurs naturally even if unintentional: "If...a person allows his vows to fall into disuse due to the onset of infirmity or senility, he will pass his final hours in *asamyama*, nonrestraint; such an unfortunate circumstance, it is believed, will adversely affect his next birth."[35] The importance of preparing for death is shown in the *Saman? Sutta*, which recommends that "(569)...when death is inevitable in any case, it is better to die possessed of a calm disposition."[36]

Imminency of Death and Quality of Life

Let us consider if this Jain process of determining the appropriate time to engage in death practices is suitable at all for a palliative context. In medicine, educated guessing of how much time a person has to live is a frequent occurrence. It is part science and part prognostication and thus, only as good as the accuracy of the diagnostic means and experience of the physician. Such predicting can be misused, of course, if a physician makes a statement based on insufficient diagnostic evidence or with a confidence exceeding their ability. It can be devastating to a patient and their family if someone is told that they have less or more time than they actually do. A patient is at risk of giving up hope, or having too much hope for longevity and delaying preparations for the end of life. On the other hand, it can also be a useful tool if done well and used sensitively and appropriately, with the humility that comes with the use of an imperfect tool. Even with a reasonable margin of error, it is very helpful to decision-making to have some indication of length of life remaining. For instance, some palliative care units disallow certain life-sustaining treatments, such as intravenous hydration and blood-transfusion, because the focus in such a place is comfort and not curing. As such, they have parameters on whom to admit, given both their focus and scarcity of beds. One of the pre-requisites for admission has to do with remaining length of life, which can be three weeks to a month in some places but varies with demand. So, having some idea of how long a person will live can contribute to the enter into palliative care and all that comes with that shift, including stoppage of certain treatments such as artificial hydration and nutrition. In such places, people are offered food and drink by mouth, but are not pressured to eat or drink. They are also not required to move. A palliative client can walk, sit in a chair or go for a stroll in a wheelchair if they wish, but they may also stay in bed. Here, based on the acceptance and understanding of the imminent approach of death in a palliative care environment, choosing to engage in Jain voluntary death practices such as taking any of the three types of fast-vows, such as to not take anything by mouth (*bhatta-paccakkhāṇa*) and also to not move beyond a certain area (*ingiṇi-maraṇa*), or to not move at all (*pāovagamaṇa*), would fit easily. The third aspect of the vows regarding receiving help from others might require negotiation. With *bhatta-paccakkhāṇa* one can receive the full assistance of others,

thus requiring no alteration of the delivery of personal care on the part of palliative caregivers. With *pāovagamaṇa*, however, one can receive no help from others. Standard nursing care for a patient who cannot move themselves requires them to have their position changed in bed at least every two hours. Also, incontinent urine and feces must be cleaned immediately upon detection. I have often been witness to cases where, after crossing a certain threshold in the dying process (which is often a dramatic change in respiration called 'cheyne-stoking' which resembles a fish gasping when out of water), the family and staff decide to not turn the person anymore. In fact, turning the patient may be enough of a disturbance to the body-systems to hasten death. Colloquially we refer to this as 'the last turn.' Because death is so near at this point, the development of bed-sores from an unchanging position is no longer relevant. It could happen that the decision is made to stop turning someone and they linger. Perhaps for days. This might be tricky because of the caregiver's habit and injunction to turn patients. Here, the Jain tradition can offer a very good approach. It is recommended to not take final vows until it is *sure* there will be no improvement in one's illness or deterioration because vows, once taken, cannot be recinded. This is different in stage of *preparation* for *sallekhana, before* taking voluntary death vows. One finds this in the *Ācārānga Sūtra*:

> *"Subduing the passions and living on little food*
> *he should endure (hardships). If a mendicant falls sick,*
> *let him again take food."*
> Book 1, Lecture 7, Lesson 8, Verse 3[37]
> But with vows there is no turning back.
> *"Occasionally, it may happen that a supposedly "fatal" illness undergoes remission or complete cure during the course of progressive fasting. In such cases the vows which have been taken cannot be rescinded; the aspirant must continue to take no more food per day than his current allotment far as long as he lives. This possibility explains the usual practice of refraining from a vow of total fasting until such time as death is clearly at hand."*[38]

So, great care must be taken with the timeliness of vow-taking. The vow to not receive help can come at the time when definitely there will be no more mobility or improvement. Another problem arises here because at this point, generally, people become

unconscious at this point and an unconscious person cannot take a vow. This issue become very subtle and requires more investigation. It requires delving into advance directives and proxy decision-making and how they might relate to vows, which brevity prevents. Would a Jain vow be valid if in advance, with clear mind and competancy, a practitioner wanted a vow to be installed at a certain point even if they are not conscious or competant? It is a fascinating question for another time. There is also the problem of bowel and bladder elimination. This is less of a problem close to death because with the stoppage of oral intake, there is a reduction in elimination. Another way around this problem is to insert a urinary catheter and rectal tube which collect elimination. This way, elimination can continue and the vow to not receive help anymore can be maintained.

The usefulness of medical treatment is often based on assessing if it will at all improve a person's quality of life. If it does not, or if it is burdensome, it is considered futile. Quality of life is not determined by a person having all of their physical faculties intact or being able to take care of themselves. To be sure, many disabled people lead very rich and meaningful lives. Quality of life is determined by conscious awareness and, based on that, the level of functionality and participation a person can have by that means. Quality of life is determined by mental status and not by physical ability.

According to this model, determining quality of life by measuring a person's ability to perform duties would be unacceptable. Let us for a moment put aside Jain religious duties, such as the required performance of austerities (which require physical ability), and merely look at secular duties such as the duty a father has to support his family. It is a commitment taken for life, which continues even after a divorce. If this father falls ill, reasonable people would not begrudge his inability to work. Actually, the tides might turn and the children might then have to care for their father. Also, social systems can build in accommodations that protect both the children and father, such as disability, unemployment and health insurances. This does not mean that the sick or disabled person themselves has an easy task finding fulfilment after losing certain functionalities and means of participation. Many of the disabled clients I have cared for over

the years struggle with depression and suicidal feelings, especially during the time when their injury is new. The saving grace in the Jain voluntary death practice is the inclusion of means to ensure that the choice to die voluntarily is not based on despondancy. The Jain system even eschews less negative motivations, such as wanting gain in the future, since such feelings are tipping the scale away from equanimity and renunciation.

The disconnect between the Jain and secular approaches here, it seems, from the view that after a certain threshold *the negative consequences from the inability to fulfil commitments made does not outweigh positive consequences from any good activities.* Even if a person can still participate, such as an ascetic being confined to a chair but still being able to give discourses and which surely causes the influx of positive karma, the inability to perform other ascetic duties is still causing the influx of negative karma. Jain karmic theory here does not leave much room for intention. Even for the Jain who sincerely wishes they could continue fulfilling their religious commitments, and feels remorse for not being able to, negative karma relentlessly bonds. In all the traditions that embrace karma and rebirth, it is usually said in some way or another that 'a short life of high quality is better than a long life of low quality.' Quality here could mean non-harm and helpfulness. From the secular perspective of health care ethics, quality of life can ever be defined this way. I would even go as far as to say that it would be dangerous to determine life being worthwhile in health care based on non-harm and helpfulness, or the ability to perform duties that rely on physical ability rather than mental capacity and meaningful participation in society. In this way, in principle, health and palliative ethics aim towards equanimity in considering people equally worthwhile and deserving of all means of help for cure or comfort.

There are occasions in the Jain tradition, however, where exceptions are made for a monastic unable to fulfil certain religious obligations due to ill-health. "[I]f an ascetic can no longer walk, he (or she) is temporar[ily] or [in]definitely exempted from the practice of wandering."[39] In Jaipur, I saw a sort of bike used for monastics when they are unable to walk. A same-gendered monastic pushes the three-wheeled bike from the back, using handle-bars with brakes, and the monastic being pushed sits inside. This allows the

monastic to fulfil the commitment to wander and not stay in one place beyond a certain length of time. This sort of creative flexibility shows an active concern for debilitated monastics, which can only be beneficial for those who require help, those who help and for the order itself in keeping the spirit of the vows in changing times.

It seems, therefore, that the Jain emphasis on choosing to engage in death practices, such as equanimity and even the adjunct practice of seeking and giving forgiveness, to most effectively prepare for death *when it is imminent* can easily be accommodated in a secular palliative setting. However, the Jain push towards choosing to engage in death practices *when one can no longer fulfil religious commitments*, such as self-study for the layperson or wandering for the ascetic, does not lend itself well to a secular palliative context.

Seeking and Gaining Permission

A major part of determining a candidate's readiness for engaging in Jain voluntary death practice is knowing their motivation for wishing to do so. The following verse from the *Ācārānga Sūtra* clearly establishes an appropriate motivation, as in what one is to wish for, and what one is not to wish for:

> *"He should not long for life, nor wish for death;*
> *he should yearn after neither, life or death. (4)*
> *He who is indifferent and wishes for the destruction*
> *of karman, should continue his contemplation*
> *becoming unattached internally and externally, he*
> *should strive after absolute purity. (5)."*
> Book 1, Lecture 7, Lesson 8, Verses 4 & 5[40]

Although some sources gloss the terms *sallekhana, santhārā* (the death-bed) and "[s]*amādhī*', i.e. voluntary death"[41] as synonymous, they each have very specific and important meanings. The '*samādhī*' in *samādhīmaraṇa* refers specifically to equanimity, shown in the above verse as not wishing for either death nor life. This does not mean that the Jain voluntary death aspirant has no intention. The above verse also clearly indicates the conscious pursuit of certain ends: the destruction of karma, detachment and purity. This is not true indifference, but must refer here only to lack of concern for the two extremes of life and death.

There are different potential lengths of Jain voluntary death practice. The majority of sources show a predominance of fasts unto death lasting one month.

"(Pārsva), after fasting a
month without drinking water, on the summit of
mount Sammeta, in the company of eighty-three
persons, stretching out his hands, died, &c, (all down
to) freed from all pains. (168)"[42]

There are also those that are measured in weeks or days.

"(Rishabha), after fasting six and a half
days without drinking water, on the summit of
mount Ashtāpada, in the company of ten thousand
monks in the Samparyanka position, died, &c. (all
down to) freed from all pains." (227)[43]

The fast unto death can even occur over the course of mere minutes or moments. Yogendra Jain, a Jain living in the USA and writing for fellow Jains in contemporary Western society, in his recent guidebook "Jain Way of Life," actually makes accommodations for practicing voluntary death in a way that can be applied to an emergency situation when death comes suddenly and unexpectedly, without preparation "The duration of this process [of *samlekhana*] can range from minutes to years. For example, if one is near death, they can mentally go into a state of meditation and renounce passions (Step 1)...(*Kashyā samlekhana*)... and mentally ready themselves for emancipation of the body. (Step 2)"[44] Jain is also the only Jain author that I have come across that has encouraged practical planning for death through the use of advance directives regarding organ donation and DNR (Do Not Resucitate) orders, which is commendable. Often the texts refer also to a twelve year fast, which is seen as a gradual preparation for the final fast and other end practices. Perhaps the length of twelve years is significant because of Mahāvīra's period of penance:

"For more than twelve years the
Venerable Ascetic Mahāvīra neglected his body
and abandoned the care of it ; he with equanimity
bore, underwent, and suffered all pleasant or unpleasant
occurrences arising from divine powers,
men, or animals. (117)"[45]

This was not a fast unto death, and I was surprised to read no mention of Mahāvīra fasting to death in the *Kalpa Sūtra* unlike the above descriptions of such done by previous *Tīrthankaras*.

Regardless, any lengthy austerities can be seen as preparation for voluntary death practice. It is to be, as much as possible, a gradual process.

> *"The gradual process of self-mortification is psychologically significant. It is not to be a slow death, nor is it meant to intensify the rigour of mortification. The primary motive is to make the person physically and mentally prepared to accept the inevitable end to lighten the burden of pain... Quickly reducing the flesh by increasing the pace of fasting may give rise to emotional excitement and morbid thoughts, which are harmful to the undisturbed spiritual end."*[46]

When someone has done extensive preparations and feels that they have developed sufficient steadfastness and the correct motivation, and seeks permission to take the voluntary death vow, who determines the candidate's readiness? What qualifies them to authoritatively do so? A precedent was set by the most recent Tīrthankaras when, in the *Viyāhapannatti*, the disciple *Khandaga Kaccāyana* seeks permission to engage in voluntary death practice and "Mahāvīra...grants him necessary permission."[47] In this day and age, however, in lieu of a liberated being, "...part of the teacher's role is to determine whether a given individual has in fact attained the level of discipline and spiritual development required."[48] The *Brhat Kathākosa* of *Āchārya Harisena*, a text appearing "...circa 940..,"[49] contains a section on the *Bhagavatī Ārādhanā* which deals with *Samādhi-maraṇa* in great detail. Although there is no English translation of this text at present, the table of contents of the text were translated by Upadhye and of the forty parts of voluntary death practice we find this: "17) *susthita*: a worthy teacher endowed with eight specific virtues."[50] Unfortunately, I found this text just as we were about to leave the "Global Centre for Jain Reserach and Indology" in Varanasi and did not have time to get this section copied and translated. There are other ways to find out the qualities of the teacher who grants permission for voluntary death practice. We know that they must be a monastic, and thus necessarily follows the " twenty eight basic and primary properties (*mťa-guṇa*) of a Jaina ascetic [which is] comprise[d of] the five great vows (*mahā-vrata*), the five 'cares' (*samiti*) [which aim to not harm beings], the six essential duties (*āvaśyaka*) [which consist of inner and outer practices], the five-fold abjuration (of indulgence in the pursuits of the five senses)..."[51] and seven more bodily austerities. The

"*mahāvratas* (five great vows) [are] - *ahimsā, satya* (truthfulness), *asteya* (taking nothing belonging to others, for own use, without permission of the owner), *brahmacarya* (chastity), and *aparigraha* (possessionlessness)."[52] This would ensure great discipline. As a monk, the preceptor himself "must be totally obedient to his [own] *upādhyāya* (preceptor) and to his [own] *Ācārya* (the head of his order)..." [53] and thus has a two-fold accountability. Next, as I have not found mention of any distinction between a preceptor who would give initiation (*dīkśā*) to an aspirant seeking admission into the order of Jain ascetics, and one who would grant permission for voluntary death practice, we can assume that any mention of qualities specific to an initiatory preceptor would hold for a voluntary deah practice preceptor. Ācārya Amitagati's *Yogasāra-prābhrta (Gift of the Essence of Yoga)*, contains verses which "mainly deal with the qualifications of the preceptor (guru) whom a *śramaṇa* would approach for initiation."[54] This text is hard to place in time, but it appears to be the same era as the *Brhat Kathākosa* since "Amitagati-I has not mentioned the date of the composition of his work, but Amigati-II has immensely praised Amitagati-I...in the tenth century A.D."[55] Here we find the presence of three significant inner qualities:

> *"...the preceptor who cherishes a feeling of non-belongingness (akincana) like one who thinks as neither I belong to anyone else, nor does anyone else belong to me, who is with no passion and who has conquered one's senses..."*[56]

All together, then, we have in a preceptor: advanced discipline, accountability, non-belongingness, non-passion, and sense control. The final quality we could distinguish as a non-engagement in worldly objects of the senses rather than non-interest in worldly objects since such would be covered by being passionless and they are listed separately, assumingly for good reason.

It is significant that the person in charge of a practitioner who is engaging in Jain voluntary death practice is expected to be so highly qualified. Not only is this time the most crucial for the practitioner, one they have been preparing for their entire life and which will determine the quality of their rebirth, but there are also very subtle negotiations that need to occur between the practitioner and the community. Jain voluntary death practice is done by monastics *and* householders, and in both cases it must be supervised

by a qualified teacher. In both cases, also, apologies are made. For the monk, the *Brhat Kathākosa* mentions "*ksamāpaṇā*: apology to the congregation",[57] and for the householder, many sources suggest that "[h]aving called relatives and friends, one should seek their forgiveness for any transgressions in conduct..."[58] In both monastic and lay communities, there will be potential grief at the departure of a close one, but considering "*Samlekhana* as the highest end...[there is] no cause for tears."[59]

The unique relations of a householder, however, are quite complex. Attachment to loved ones and wealth can interfere with death in equanimity. To be qualified, "[b]efore [voluntary death] can be resorted to, all worldly ties are to be severed: the individual will already be out of this world..."[60] This, of course, is very difficult. Even when someone considers themselves prepared for voluntary death practice and confirms it with the assessment of a highly qualified preceptor, one cannot predict what will happen as death approaches. The process of dying, when the elemental particles are coming to destruction or blowing up, "may give rise to emotional excitement and morbid thoughts, which are harmful to the undisturbed spiritual end."[61] In service of equanimity, there are practical ways to improve the chances of the practitioner being "free from the memories of the friendly attachment..."[62] In terms of attachment to wealth, one part of the process of voluntary death is in the "...intermediate phase...of renunciation... [when h]e gives all his belongings away...."[63] In terms of attachment to loved-ones, the practitioner is not surrounded by family, but rather, monastic assistants.

> *"...the saints who ordain or cause the saints to undertake this vow in a prescribed way, are called 'Expiation/holy death preceptors' (niryāpakas).*
>
> *The Head-Saints have advocated the presence of 48 saints when a saint undertakes the vow of holy death. They let him undertake the vow of holy death in a proper place and, then, perform various duties as described below:*

1. Four saints serve the mortifier saint to raise him, to get him seated and so on so that there may be no difficulty in observance of restraint.
2. Four saints cause him to listen to religious scriptures.

3. Four saints cause him to take foods as prescribed by Ācārānga (Book on Monastic Conduct).
4. Four saints arrange for the potable drinks for him.
5. Four saints try to protect him.
6. Four saints remove the filthy excretions of the body of the saint.
7. Four saints remain at the door of the place where the saint is undertaking his holy death vow.
8. Four saints arrange and address the visitors to the saint.
9. Four saints take care of the saint in the night while awake.
10. Four saints judge the situation of the country and public.
11. Four saints tell the religious stories to the outside visitors.
12. Four saints refute the alien doctrines through debates.

Thus, these forty eight holy death preceptor saints try to get the saint cross the ocean of weary world through their care in maintaining the meditation and equanimity of the mortifier saint. If one does not get the required number of holy death preceptor saints, one can arrange the above activities with the number of saints available at the time. However, it is necessary that at least two saints be there."[64]

There is a discrepancy in terminology. Jnānamatī glosses the term '*niryāpaka*' as referring to both the ordaining preceptor and the assistant monks, calling them *all* 'preceptors' when, in fact, they are not all involved in the conferring of the voluntary death vow. We could include the preceptor in the category of *niryāpaka*, since they do not merely confer the vow but help throughout the death process. However, we cannot include the assistants in the category of 'preceptor.' Other texts support this distinction. The *Bhagavatī Ārādhanā* lists the following: "*susthita*: a worthy teacher endowed with eight specific virtues...[and] *upasarpaṇa*: seeking admission under a Teacher", which is distinguished from "*niryāpaka*: the attendant ascetics that help one at the time of *Samādhi-maraṇa*."[65] Ācārya Amitagati's *Yogasāra-prābhrta* makes the distinction as well: "The saint who initiates the would-be saints...is said to be the initiator-saint, the remaining (saints) who help...are called the '*niryāpaka*' ...saints."[66] Upon closer inspection of this verse, the preceptor is referred to as *vyavahārājnam*, 'the one who knows the procedure,' and *pravrajyādāyakah*, 'the one who gives the going forth/initiation,' or 'initiator.' The *niryāpaka*s are *not* this initiating person who knows the procedure, but, rather, are "the other ones."

It is noteworthy that in Jnānamatī's *Jaina Bhāratī* has the term 'ordain' for the process of conferring voluntary death vows. I have come across many instances in Jain and Buddhist texts where the same terminology is used for ordination/initiation as that used for death practices, such as 'going forth.' Above we have seen its use in relation to monastic initiation, and Caillat notes that "[b]oth layman and monk..."go forth" to the death-bed, and are termed *sadhu* when they take leave from the world..."[67] This also lends strength to my usage of textual examples that specifically refer to monastic initiation to clarify voluntary death practice, such as those from the *Yogasāra-prābhrta.* This terminological parallel deserves further investigation.

The main point, though, is the way in which Jain voluntary death practice deals with attachment to wealth and loved-ones through separation and qualified assistance. And earlier we looked at the seeking of Jain voluntary death vows, and the candidate's readiness and the determination of such by a qualified preceptor. Are these applicable to palliative care? What readiness does a patient require if seeking withdrawal of treatment? What are the qualifications of those that assist with such a decision, and those that remain at the bedside in palliative care? What can people do to appropriately resolve issues around their wealth and estate in palliative care? To answer these questions we can look to both the legal principles of decision-making in health care as found in the Health Care Consent Act, and to actual practice in hospital.

Capacity, Autonomy, Physician and Family

In having the ability to make an informed decision in health care, the main pre-requisite is capacity or competency on the part of the patient. Some examples of those who are without capacity are those who are unconscious, those having psychosis or dementia, and those who are at risk of harming themselves or others. Such people cannot fully comprehend the weighing of the benefits and harms for a particular course of action. A physician can refuse treatment or its withdrawal if they deem someone to not have capacity, and a patient can refute a physician's opinion that they are incompetent by seeking the help of a third-party competency-assessment committee. For our purposes, I am going to apply the principles of the Health Care Consent Act to both the starting *and* withdrawing of treatment. The Canadian Health Care Consent Act states that:

> *"**Treatment must not begin** [or be withdrawn]..if...a) a health practitioner proposes a treatment [or its withdrawal] for a person and finds that the person is incapable with respect to the treatment; b) before the treatment is begun [or withdrawn], the health practitioner is informed that the person intends to apply, or has applied, to the Consent and Capacity Board...for a review of the finding..."*[68]

Immediately we can see that it is presumed that the physician is the one suggesting treatment or its withdrawal. In terms of the source of the idea of treatment or its withdrawal, the legal wording is weighted towards the physician, not the patient. This is not to say that the patient is not entitled to direct their own care. If there is an appropriate proxy-decision-maker, under

> *"**Principles for making a decision**ĀcA person who makes a decision on an incapable recipient's behalf concerning a personal assistance service shall do so in accordance with the following principles:*
>
> 1. If the person knows the wish applicable to the circumstances that the recipient expressed while capable...the person shall make the decision in accordance with the wish.
> 2. If the person does not know of a wish applicable to the circumstances that the recipient expressed while capable...or if it is impossible to comply with the wish, the person shall act in the recipient's best interest."[69]

The strength behind this injunction is the personal preference of the patient. Additionally, it should be "encourage[d for] the recipient to participate, to the best of his or her abilities, in the...decision."[70] This is because capacity depends on the treatment and time in that one can be capable with respect to one treatment or at a certain time and incapable with respect to another treatment or at another time.[71] There is the potential for capacity to return.[72] So, in these ways, the request for the withdrawal of nutrition and hydration can arise from the patient's preference, known directly or indirectly. If the preference is *not* known, the request can come from a person's values and beliefs, be they religious or secular. From the same section:

> *"**Best interests**....(2) In deciding what the recipient's best interests are, the person shall take into consideration,*
>
> *(a) The values and beliefs that the person knows that the recipient held when capable and believes he or she would still act on if capable;*
>
> *...c) the following factors:*

1. Whether the personal assistance service is likely to,
   i. improve the quality of the person's life,
   ii. prevent the quality of the recipient's life from deteriorating, or
   iii. reduce the extent to which, or the rate at which, the quality of the recipient's life is likely to deteriorate.
2. Whether the quality of the recipient''s life is likely to improve, remain the same or deteriorate without the personal assistance service.
3. Whether the benefit the recipient is expected to obtain from the personal service outweighs the risk of harm to him or her.
4. Whether a less restrictive or less intrusive personal assistance service would be as beneficial as the personal assistance service that is the subject of the decision.
5. Whether the personal assistance service fosters the recipient's independence."[73]

When advocating for withdrawal of treatment, the crux of this section is quality of life based on values and beliefs. Using this, one can easily argue in support of a natural death by pointing to an individual's unique perspective, be it religious or secular. It is problematized, however, by the concept of 'deterioration of life' and 'harm' because when nutrition and hydration stops, the body systems do rapidly fail. In Jain voluntary death, although the body does emaciate, there are some special signs that can occur which would indicate an improvement in the quality of the person's life despite facing death. *Bhagavatī Ārādhanā* mentions the "*lasśyā*: spiritual glow or tint"[74] which occurs just prior to death in equanimity. Such phenomena are hard to recognize in a scientific environment. In a secular health care setting, body system failure is seen as deterioration and harm. It is the failure of the goal of medicine, which is the maintenance and curing of body systems. The strength of this goal is one of the main causes for the lack of development in palliative care. The model of comfort over cure meets with much resistance at all levels, from health practitioners on the front-line to those who distribute funding. In Toronto, the lack of palliative beds and institutions, and the lack of palliative training required for medical students, are a testament to this distributive resistance. In a palliative model, however, there is much

more acceptance of ending treatment and dying naturally. Dying well is the goal, and so withdrawal of treatment is either required or much easier to accomplish. In critical, acute and chronic care settings, where many people also die but where there is an emphasis on curing, for some semblance of a natural death to occur there must be a reliance on the power of autonomy as indicated in legal documents such as the Health Care Consent Act.

We have established the qualifications of the patient in seeking withdrawal of care as a capacity which includes consciousness, reasoning ability and a lack of the potential to harm oneself or others. Now we must look at the qualifications of the person responsible for the care of the patient who is dying, which for the most part is the primary physician, and the qualifications of those who are permitted to be at the bedside, which is typically closest family. Let us look at the physician first. Most conversations with physicians are prompted by the physician themselves. Even if the patient has a request to meet with and is seeking something from the physician, the physician can choose when and whether to engage with the patient or not. Their time is seen as limited and precious because they are busy helping many patients, and they have a wealth of knowledge and experience. This sets up a power-dynamic that is hard to break. They, in principle, are to have the Hippocratic Oath to not harm others, which is perfectly in line with ahimsa. But this is usually seen as avoidance of physical harm. What is a patient is to die imminently, and wants to do something very quickly to prepare but needs the physician's help to do so, and they make themselves unavailable? This would be harmful to the patient. Most malpractice suits that are made public concern a mistake in treatment or diagnosis. Very rarely do they have to do with neglect or emotional abuse. Physicians are required to do many years of both classroom-based medical education and hospital-based practical application of theory. How well a physician does in their training is never made public. They either pass or fail, so in that way they are equal, but there is a wide range among those who pass in terms of knowledge, skill, experience, ethics and bed-side manner. This is a problem. In reality it means that we end up with very exceptional doctors, and very poor ones as well. Many patients and staff complain of physician arrogance which both reduces access to their presence and services and interferes with their ability to hear what patients and nurses are saying that can

very well help in reaching the goal of healing or comfort. Doctors naturally have status, respect, power and money but often do not deserve such. In praise of nurses, they spend the most time with patients and often have more knowledge, skill and experience than many doctors. One of the many causes of bad doctors is their disproportionate esteem at the expense of support for nurses, both in practice and in the distribution of positions and wages.

I think that the push in Jain voluntary death care for the preceptor who oversees the process to have very high and refined characteristics can be inspiring and influential to secular health care. There are societal efforts to improve the quality of physicians, such as those that aim to make malpractice suits more public and the formulation of references that expose people's experiences with various doctors. There is also a new role, the nurse practitioner, that has distributed the power to treat patients in a novel way by allowing more advance training and responsibilities to nurses. These are all moves in the right direction but increased and stronger ongoing public pressure is needed to truly make a dramatic and lasting shift in the training and expectations of physicians to improve their quality.

Lastly, let us find the qualifications of those who are permitted to be at the bedside. The health Care Consent Act favours spouses, partners and relatives in relation to decision-making. 'Spouses' are defined by marriage, or co-habitation, or having a child together[75] whereas 'partners' are defined as a "close personal relationship that is of primary importance in both persons' lives"[76] which, happily, is accommodating to same-sex couples. These relationships are given prominence. Next, 'relatives' are defined by "blood, marriage or adoption."[77] In hospital, such people are favoured as well. There is no mention of personal qualifications. Whereas in the Jain voluntary death practice, those at the bedside are at least monastics holding a code of discipline, in a secular hospital setting the qualifications of those at the bedside at death-time are dependent solely on interpersonal relations. These are useful indicators but because there is no behavioural or motivational expectations, they leave much room for difficulties around visitation of, and wealth inheritance from, the dying person. The Jain emphasis on relinquishing wealth in advance and separation from loved-ones during voluntary death, after proper farewell exercises

such as forgiveness are performed, helps the dying person achieve maximal calmness and equanimity. In secular health care, such as in Canada, the majority of families wait for estate distribution until after death. Additionally, family typically want to be around the dying person until their last breath. Both can cause disturbances to the dying person, as visitation and concerns over wealth distribution can be from the best or worst of intentions. Visitation and inheritance can be linked, as in the case of a child who has not been in contact with a parent and breaks the estrangement in order to show support at the end of life in order specifically to win favour and influence wealth distribution. This happens more frequently than most would like to admit. I would even be bold enough to say that *fighting over inheritances is one of the leading cause of the destruction of family harmony*. It is difficult in practice to distribute wealth in advance and to screen visitors in hospital, *especially* around death because often everyone shows up. There are, however, precedents for both. It is possible to make wealth distribution known in advance, and for it to be dependent on conditions determined by the dying person. This would bring the person themselves much relief knowing that this has been adequately dealt with and will not cause fighting between family members nor inspire wrong actions in relation to the dying person to try and shift the weight of their share. With visitation, in some environments, such as intensive care and palliative care, ensuring that certain people who the patient does not want in their presence being prevented entry and access is common. If a person does not want family around the bed grieving after a certain point in the death process, so as to die undisturbed, they can make this request known and it will be followed. I would suggest that the separation from wealth and family in Jain voluntary death is one that can be very helpful in the pursuit of a peaceful death in secular health care, and entirely possible to achieve given the respect for patient autonomous wishes. Further, I would suggest that despite the compulsion and habit for people to consider presence with and grieving around the dying person as a necessary and beneficial part of the process of death, it may not be in the best interest of the dying person. Grieving is not only important, it is necessary. Death and loss are a trauma and the experience of grief is a part of healing this trauma. Despite this, grief does not have to be displayed around the dying person. The Jain voluntary death model strongly recommends against it, and I

very much concur. Grief can be experienced in an anticipatory way, also during the death either in the same location as the death or not, and after the death has occurred. Who is around the dying person and when is entirely up to the person themselves. They may want family and grieving in their presence until the moment they are dead. However, they may not. In such a case, if a person does truly have the best interest of the dying loved-one at heart, it must be considered that their desire to grieve around the dying person against their wishes might be a self-centered act that actually will disturb the death-process by triggering feelings of attachment in the mind of the dying person and making it more difficult for them to leave smoothly.

Conclusion

The topic of Jain voluntary death practice is vast. It has allowed countless practitioners the opportunity to face death with confidence, calm and equanimity. If so many people have had a better death in dependance on this practice, by extension, those connected to such people must have also had an easier time confronting their grief knowing that their loved one or monastic sibling entered the state of death in a controlled and highly evolved manner. This unique practice requires much more attention. So much material on the subject has been in its defense by attempting to prove that it is not a form of suicide. This has been an important dialogue and exercise, which is good to continue, but I think that there are also many other important aspects of Jain voluntary death practice to discuss. This is why I have consciously not spent any time on the suicide issue in this study. I have, however, raised the important question as to whether voluntary death vows can be directed in advance for future implementation after someone becomes unconscious or incompetent. If applied to health care, or likened to an advance directive by a secular patient who wishes to have artificial feeding and hydration removed if they were to become unconscious or incompetent, this could lead to more discussion around euthanasia or assisted suicide. I have avoided this area of voluntary death as well because I strongly hold to the passive nature of withdrawal of care not being any form of killing. Again, it is fruitful to continue dialogue in this area, but I have chosen to place my energy elsewhere.

The three-fold process of *Sallekhana-santhārā-samādhimaraṇa* has

the potential for incredible benefit to so many more people in the future, both Jains and non-Jains. Among those who non-Jains, some will embrace transmigration or some other post-death continuity of existence as part of their world-view and some will not. The goal of this paper, in addition to clarifying some aspects of death coming from the stoppage of oral intake and activity both in Jainism and in palliative care, has been to show that there are some powerful ideas and practices that can potentially help the dying and the bereaved experience without reliance on religion. In a secular end of life setting, which is not only a palliative care or hospice environment but can include emergency, acute and critical care settings where many people also die, the Jain emphasis on: (1) voluntary and autonomous decision-making to withdraw treatment, including (but not limited to) nutrition and hydration, conjoined with *qualified* co-decision-makers; (2) *qualified* assistance and separation from objects of attachment, has great potential to assist the dying and the bereaved in having an improved experience during life's most difficult time.

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11
Jinakanchi Math and its Contribution to Religion and Community

S. Thanyakumar

Jainism flourished in the Tamil country with the support of the Chera, Chola, Pandya, Pallava, Vijayanagara rulers and their feudal chieftains. Jains lived in almost all parts of the Tamil country and enlivened the Tamil community. Jaina ascetics lived in the natural caverns and made them the main centres of learning. A galaxy of renowned Jaina preceptors flourished in these cloisters where people and pupils were taught and educated. These places are called **Pallis.** Even today the educational institutions are called Pallis in Tamil. It is evident from about 585 inscriptions pertaining to Jaina religion discovered all over Tamilnadu. A careful survey of those epigraphical records reveals that Jainism flourished in the Tamil country as early as the 5th century B.C. and continued to hold till 16th century with the royal support.

The lithic records of different periods reveal the existence of many Jaina Pallis all over Tamil country. The kings, queens, feudal chiefs, the mercantile guilds and agriculture guilds and lay votaries supported these pallis. More and more pallis were founded and named after them.

Alongwith these pallis, monastic institutions called "Sanghas' were also established. The epigraphs from the different parts of Tamil country reveal that **Dravida Sangha** (I.B.C.) at Patalika (present day Cuddalore), **Dramila Sangha** (468-469 A.D.) at Madurai; **Veera Sangha** (9th Cent. A.D.) at Thirunarunkondai functioned imparting theological and regular education.

In Sangam literature, there are references to these Jain pallis and Jain ascetics. In **Silapathikaram,** a Tamil classic, there is a detailed account of the Jain palli, Jaina nun and Charanas.

The cave shelters with stone beds, sculptures and epigraphs provide the material evidence for the rich heritage of Jainism in Tamilnadu. There are hundreds of such Jaina monuments spread throughout Tamilnadu. And in most of these areas like **Madurai, Tirunelveli, Pudukottai, Coimbatore, Erode** and **Trichy,** there are **no ancient Tamil Jain settlements at present.**

The southern Tamilnadu is rich in Jaina monuments. The monuments include caves, inscriptions and structural temples in ruin or converted into other places of worship.

The Northern Tamilnadu, generally known as **Tondainadu** is noted for **Āgliving Jainism".** It is in this region ancient Tamil Jain families are living in about 100 villages and towns. There one can see the Jaina caves with stone beds, Brahmi inscriptions, Tamil inscriptions, cave temples, loose sculptures, structural temples, with paintings underworship and Jaina maths. There are three Jain centres with structural temples and ancient Jain community living at **Deepangudi, Mannargudi** and **Karunthittangudi** of erstwhile Tanjore District In Chola country, till date.

The difference in the distribution of monuments, inscriptions and structural temples under worship between the Southern Tamilnadu and Northern Tamilnadu is reflected in the number of inscriptions at different periods. There is a decline after the early period i.e. 5^{th} cent. B.C. – 9^{th} cent. A.D. in the Southern Tamilnadu and a gradual increase from the 9^{th} cent. A.D. – 18^{th} cent. A.D. in the Northern Tamilnadu.[1]

The Tondainadu region includes the present day districts of Chennai, Cuddalore, Kancheepuram, Thiruvannamalai, Thiruvallur, Vellore and Villupuram. In Thiruvannamalai and Villupuram districts there are large number of Jaina Centres till date.

Ancient Pallis and Sanghas

The Jain Centres of Tondainadu were flourishing with Pallichandam land grants during the periods of Pallava, Chola, Adiyaman, Sambuvaraya and others. Most of these centres are concentrated in the Tindivanam, Vandavasi and Kanchipuram taluks.

The oldest structural temple at Thiruparuthikundram, the **Jinakanchi** in the outskirts of Kanchipuram received a land grant

in the 6th Cent. A.D. Acharya **Vajranandi** was in charge of this temple and later a well organized **Rishi Samudaya – a Munivasa** the forerunner of Matha, functioned here till 15th cent A.D. The Pontiffs **Chandrakirti, Ananthavirya Vamana, Mallisena Vamana** and **Puspasena** presided over the Jinakanchi Centre.[2]

In **Thirunarungkondai** (9th – 12 cent A.D.) a galaxy of pontiffs looked after the matha: **Veeranandi Adigal, Kavi Paramesthiyar, Samayanathar, Gunabadracharya.**

At **Thirumalai**, near Polur also a Jain Centre flourished from 9th cent A.D.[3] The names of **Gunavira Maamuni** and **Arambanandi**[4] were recorded in the inscriptions. One of the inscriptions is bilingual with Sanskrit and Tamil portions. In the Sanskrit portion Tirumalai is called **Arhasugiri** and in Tamil portion it is referred to as **Enguna Iraivan Tirumalai** (the hill of the Siddha Paramesthi).[5]

In some other centres, called pallis, the traces of regular institutions can be discerned. The pontiffs' names include the suffix, **Adigal.** In **Perumundur** near Tindivanam, a lithic record of **Nandivarnam II** dated 866 A.D. mentions **Ravikula Sundara Perumpalli** with **Mallisena Peria Adigal** as pontiff.[6] At Anandamangalam, another village, about 12 k.m. from Perumandur, there is a cave with a panel of exquisite sculptures and an epigraph that calls this centre **Jinagiripalli.** The Jaina Pontiff **Varthamana Peria Adigal** had arranged for feeding of the devotees. It is dated in **942 A.D.** during the 35th regnal year of **Parantaka Chola I.**[7]

In **Sithamoor** (Melsithamoor) near Gingee in Villupuram District, a Jain Centre dating back in 8th Cent A.D.[8] continues till date. It has a continuous history and monastic institution called **Jinakanchi Matha.** There are two temples: the **Malainathar temple** and **Parsvanathar temple**. Simmapuri is the ancient name of this place. The Pontiff has a title **ĀgSri Lakshmi Sena Bhattaraka Pattacharya Varya Swamigal.**

Bhattaraka Tradition and Mathas

All the above mentioned institutions have become extinct except Jinakanchi Matha at Melsithoor. The temples attached to them are still under worship. The introduction and continuation of the **Bhattaraka tradition** made it possible for the Sithamoor centre to continue till date.

The early part of the medieval period was a testing time for the Digambara Jainas of different parts of India, particularly South India. It became extremely difficult for the ascetics to move freely, observing the monastic code prescribed for them. The restrictions and sometimes persecutions prevented the preaching and influence excerted on the conduct of the lay followers. As a result the Jaina community faced disintegration and sometimes large scale conversion. Under these adverse and insecure circumstances as a policy of survival, the system of **Bhattarakas** was evolved. This unique functionary was created to discharge certain religious and social duties in the interest of the community. To help the Bhattaraka in his duties an institution known as **Matha** was constituted.[9]

The use of the word **Bhattaraka** indicates that in the early days Mathas were presided over by the esteemed Nirgranthas. **Acharya Kundakunda** coined this word as suffix for Thirthankara. In Arpakham near Kanchipuram, the moolavar is called **Athi Bhattarahar.** Later days the madathipathis were also called by the same epithet. At Thirunarungkondai one of the inscriptions dated 1031 A.D. refers to a **Athi Bhattalakar Puspasena Deva.** The Tamil form is the **Bhattarar** or **Bhattalakar.**

There were 36 seats of Bhattarakas in India. This system is absent in Eastern India and most parts of Northern India. Now about 12 seats exist; out of these 6 are in Karnataka, 3 in Maharastra, 2 in Tamilnadu and 1 in Rajasthan.

The extant Jain Matha at Sithamoor is presided over by the Madathipatti with the title 'Sri Lakshmi Sena Bhattaraka'. It indicates that the place belongs to one of the ganas namely **Sena Gana** of old repute and named as **Jina Kanchi Matha.**

Two of the lithic records at Tirunarungkondai refers to the **Bhattaraka** and **Madapathi** directly.[10] In no other records there is direct reference to the Madathipathi or name of the Matha.

Jinakanchi is the name of the Tiruparuthikundram in the out skirts of town of Kancheepuram. It is believed that due to unfavourable conditions at Kanchi, the matha that functioned there was transferred to Sithamoor. From that the palli tradition with **Arambanandi**, as administrator, ended and Bhattarakas with title **Sri Lakshmisena Bhattaraka** started functioning at Sithamoor.

At Thiruparuthikundram temple, there was an establishment of ascetics called **Rishisamudaya** – the Munivasa. Acharyas of the

Senagana **Mallisena Vamanacharya** and **Puspasena Vamanacharya**, the Guru – Sisya, looked after this centre. Here also there is a mention of Arambanandi as in the Sithamoor and Tirumalai.

Recently one pillar inscription (11th Cent A.D.) was discovered during the renovation of the Kailasanatha temple at Deepangudi, near Kumbakonam in the heart of Cholanadu. There is a reference to the Arambanandi of the Deepangudipalli. There is a Jain temple dedicated to the Adibagwan, **the Deepanaya Swami.**[11]

Arambanandi

The word **Arambanandi** had been variously explained by the scholars most of them had taken the word to mean a novice into the order. One scholar surmises that it refers to the Thirthankar particularly Rishaba – the first Thirthankar.[12] He had taken the aramba – beginning: and Nandi for Thirthankar. Another scholar interpreted it as a festival.[13] But in Jaina parlance it means one who is involved in wordly activities. So **Arambanandi is one who looks after the landgrants and connected agricultural activities for upkeeping of the Pallis.** It is peculiar to the Jaina inscriptions and particularly of chola period.

History of Jinakanchi Matha

In Sithamoor the oldest record refers to the Arambanandi. He is the fore-runner of **Madathipathy** (Bhattaraka). This inscription belongs to the Aditya I (888 A.D.). At that time the Malainatha temple is referred to as **Thirukattampalli** and **Thiruvoorampalli**. The oral tradition and folk literary evidence points to a Nirgrantha **Santhi Maamuni.** There are ancient paintings and a labeled pillar sculpture in the Parswanatha temple Muhamantapa.

A folk literary work in Tamil called **"Chittamur Dharmadevi Oosal".** It is a decad (10 hymns) sung while swinging. In one of them (5th hymn) it is narrated that **Karikala Chola** paid obeisance to Santhi Muni and endowed the palli with land grants. It was entrusted with the Arambanandi :

It is a grant for a lighting a perpetual lamp in the hall of the Malainatha temple where canonical texts were expounded

In continuation of this palli tradition, further land grants as pallichandams were donated by the subsequent Chola rulers. Vikramachola himself had made a land grant to **"Chittamoor Singapurinatha Swami"** in his 18th Regnal year i.e. 1136 A.D. The

grant included 3 ma land each in almost 75 villages surrounding Sithamoor.

This grant is significant and important turning point in the history of Chithamoor. Vikramachola in his 17th Regional year (1135 A.D.) had facilitated the sale of land as pallichandam in virupedunadu to one Arambanandi at Thiruparuthi Kundram.[14]

It can be reasonably surmised that the foundation for the future institution of Matha is laid during Vikramachola rule. There are nearly 16 dated inscriptions ranging from 9th Cent A.D. – 20th Cent A.D.[15] Yet we are not able to know the names of preceptors before 18th Cent A.D.

Col. Colin Mackenzie, the then Surveyor General, met the Chittamoor Pontiff in the year 1816 A.D. He had collected complete details about the matha from the pontiff **Muni Badra Deva.**[16] These manuscripts are the only source, available on the history of the Tamil Jain community in Tondainadu region and a pocket of a few centres in Cholanadu (erstwhile Tanjore Dist.)

It is not possible to exactly pinpoint the year in which the Matha at Sithamoor was named as Jinakanchi Math and functioned as a organized Jain centre. Yet one can gauge the intense influence it excerted on the Tamil Jain community. This latent spell of the Madathipathi is facilitated the continuation of a few pockets of Tamil Jain settlements till date.

Veerasenacharya is the only name available in record before the pontiff Munibadra Deva at Sithamoor: "About S 1438 there was disorder and anarchy all over the country on account of invasion by enemy tribes. Many people deserted their hearth and home. The presiding Acharya went to some western country, after appointing a disciple for the instruction of Dharma to those that survived in the invasion. The disciple died a few years afterwards.

When peace was restored in the country **Virasenacarya** returned from the west and was teaching Dharma at the Cittamur Matha. The disciples came in Succession after him impart religious instructions even today.[17]

It is generally believed that Veerasenacharya retaliated the persecutions and revitalized the Jain matha with the support of the Jain community of Peramundur, a nearby village. The fact, that the Jain community of Peramundur helped Veerasenacharya was immortalized in the form of ancient painting in the sanctum

sanctorum of the Chandranatha temple called **Periakovil.** In remembrance of this the leaders of this village are honoured in all the festivals and annual car festival even today.[18]

One of the ancient families of this village is called **Peria** family and the head of the family was called **Periavar.** His name is prefixd with the title i.e. Peria Doraisami Nainar. Along with him another family of Thazhanur, called Udayar family is also honoured. I had an opportunity of witnessing this on the occasion of the car festival. The date for annual festival is fixed only after consulting the Jain community of the Peramundur. Even now after the **"Patrika Pooja"**, the madathipathy visits this village and invites the Jain community by issuing the first patrika.

The circumstantial evidences suggest that the revitalization of the Jain math could have happened during the 16th Cent A.D. The inscription at the base of the Manasthampa datable in 1578 A.D. supports this assumption.

After Veerasenacharya, the next Pontiff's name available is that of **Munibadra Deva.** The literary evidences suggest the names of two more pontiffs. In one of the folk literary works entitled **"Dharmadevi Sobanamalai"** there is a reference to the Madathipathis, the Jina gurus. It refers to **Padmanandi Bhattar, Jinasen acharya** and **Munibadra Deva.**

"Engal jinaguru Padmanandi
Bhattarakar porpatha malar
Panindu Sobanum Paadungkodi

× × × ×

Vamanai Potrum ***Jinasena***
ajitha *jina sekaran*
Maamuni Bathra Devaguruvai
Vannagi sobanum Paadungkodi"[19]

× × × ×

"Chithai Nagaril Vaazhum
Simmapuri Nathariyum
Muni Badra Devaraiyum mun
Vananki Nindralo

× × × ×

Lakshmisena Bhattarakarai lakshimiyum
Panindu Nindralo.[20]

On the basis of the above facts, the line of pontiffs at Sithamoor may be reconstructed as follows :

Sathimamuni (888 A.D.)
↓
Veerasenacharya (Reference Year 1578 A.D.)
↓
Padmanandi Bhattarar
↓
Jinasenacharya
↓
Muni Badra Deva (Reference Year 1816)

Abinava Adisena Bhattarar (Reference Year 1865)

Table 11.1: List of Pontiffs after 1865 A.D.

S. no.	Birthname	Ascension Ref. Year	Pontificacy Years	Village / Year ended
1.	Chinnakulandai	?	?	Veeranamoor
2.	Vimalanatha	?	?	Veeranamoor
3.	Appavu	1895? (1903 Epigraph)	25	Veeranamoor (1920)
4.	Chakkravarthy	1920?	22	Agalur (1950)
5.	Samudravijaya	1942	14	Agalur (1956)
6.	Chandrakeerthy Sastri	1956	15	Erumboor (1971)
7.	Sripala Varni	July 1974	10	Thatchur
8.	Chakkravarthy	May 1983	5	Valathy (24.02.1987)
9.	Veerakumar	May 1987	5	Uppuvelur
10.	Sullak Somakeerthy	Sept. 1990	6	Erumboor
11.	Pulavar Adiraj	March 1996	4	Ponnur (28.07.1999)
12.	Appandairaj	September 1999	Till date	Melmalayanur

My efforts to collect details of above mentioned pontiffs were

not successful. The details presented here after 1974 are from the monthly magazine MUKKUDAI of Jain Youth Forum.

There are no records to know from which date the coronation title of **Sri Lakshmisena Bhattaraka** was adopted and Sithamoor Matha named as **Jinakanchi Math.**

The epigraphical evidence for the title appears in 1903 and 1951 in the Parswanatha temple and literary evidence in folk literature **"Thanjavur Vazhthukai"** (Felicitation of married couple).

There is close contact between Kolhapur Jain Matha in Maharastra and Jinakanchi Matha. An inscription dated in 1774 A.D. found from the Jain temple at Vadagaon in the Kolhapur area in Maharastra state, refers to the "preceptor Lakshmisena Bhattaraka as presiding over the Simhasanas of **Dilli** Karavira **(Kolhapur) Jinakanchi** and **Penukonda.** This teacher belonged to **Senagana, Rishabanvaya, Pustakagachha.** Kolhapur was renowned as one among the four pontifical centres or spiritual thrones sacred, to the Digambara Jain Community."[21] The Prasasti of the Jain temples in Tamilnadu mentions all these four seats even today.

At Sithamoor Pontiff **Abinava Adisena Bhattarar** had completed the construction of the Vimana of the Parswanatha temple in the year 1865 A.D. So till that time the tradition of common title Sri Lakshmisena Bhattara and naming the matha as Jinakanchi Matha was not in vogue? Probably, the date of the epigraph at the Jain temple of Vadagaon had to be reexamined.

Another interesting factor is that the pontiffs of the Kolhapur Jain matha from 1824 to till date are from Tamilnadu. The average pontificacy is 40 years and above![22]

The name of the last popular Senagana Munivasa at Jinakanchi, the Thiruparuthikundram was adopted for this still continuing Senagana Matha! The choice of the same coronation title Lakshmi Sena is also significant. In the Pattavali of Senagana, the last monk mentioned is **Lakshmi Sena!**[23]

Status of Bhattaraka

Bhattarakas are revered as Religious teachers and leaders of the society. In the fourfold Jaina Sangha he is placed above the laymen and below the ascetics.

Like laymen he lives in a house, holds estate, administers

property, moves about using all means of transportation. In olden days they were using Palanquins and Bullock Cart.

He is regarded as a religious ruler and the Matha a state. Bhattaraka is entitled to use ceremonial umbrella, chamera, wooden seat, wooden sandals and a trumphet (Baangaa). His dress includes 2 piece (a Dhothi and a upper Saffron) cotton clothing and a turban. He carries a **Pincha** (a tuff of Peacock feathers), **Kamandala** (water pot) and **Jabamala** (rosary).

Like ascetics he is supposed to partake food once in a day. Even this food is moderate in tastes and he observes fasting on important auspicious days. So he combines both ascetic and laity characteristics. He displays the pomp of the ruler and observes the piety of the ascetic.

He observes the practice of Nirgrantha muni at the time of death discarding even the sparse clothing. The cremation ceremony is also similar.

Appointment and Duties

The pontifficacy of Jinakanchi Matha is unique in that it included both unmarried and married men. In ancient days in most of the Jain villages, around Chithamur, there lived a number of Sravakas well versed in theological and general literacy with good ethical standards. So there is no separate training or pre-designation.

The presiding Pontiff at his last days appoints his successor by giving *diksha*. On an auspicious day the Coronation–Pattabiseka Ceremony is celebrated. In case of sudden death of the Pontiff the community selects a educated and acceptable person. The pontiff of the Kolhapur Jain Math gives the *diksha* and Pattabiseka performed.

In the normal course of appointment of new pontiff, both of them were taken in procession to the temple and in the presence of the community the rituals performed. And then the Pontiff gives *diksha* and hands over the Pincha and Kamandala to the new Pontiff as a mark of handing over charge.

The new Pontiff whether married or unmarried severs his contact with his family and village. He becomes the leader of the whole community and observes celibacy. His birth name and all his Purvashrama connections were renounced and assumes the title

Sri Lakshmi Sena Bhattaraka Pattacharya Varya. The funeral pyre is lighted by the priest, not by the family member, and cremated in sitting posture on the rocks.

The duties of the Bhattaraka are both religious and social in nature. His prime responsibility is to arrange for imparting the religions education to the students and to deliver religious discourse. He has to initiate both boys and girls into religious life by a ritual **upadesa.** In ancient days the palm leaf manuscripts were kept in the mathas and given to the students. So the matha was both a school and a library. He is also expected to train persons to perform rituals. In Tamilnadu there are specific families called Upadhyars who perform the religious and social rituals. The Pontiff is the ex-officio trustee of all the temples in Tamilnadu (Sarva Jinalaya Paripalakar). As such he has to direct the various activities connected with Jinalayas i.e. renovation, installation of images, annual festivals, *vidhis* and *vidhanas*.

All announcements and invitations connected with the temples and community have to be stamped with the matha's, official stamp.

His social activity and obligation lie in influencing, encouraging and controlling the general conduct of the laity. He has to exercise his authority in all matters concerned with the spiritual and social spheres.

At times he settled the general disputes or domestic quarrels among the siblings, conducted court proceedings and prescribed punishments. In addition to the voluntary offerings to the temple and Matha, he collected very nominal taxes as a mark of his authority over the Tamil Jaina community. Certain taxes like Adupuvari i.e. Stove tax, Homavari i.e. tax on Homas.

Bhattarakas looked after the economical well being of their followrs by helping them with monetary assistance and sanctioned loans on very nominal interest either in cash or grains.

Contributions

The significant and the most important contribution of Jinakanchi Jain math is the consolidation and unification of Tamil Jain community. Tamil Jain Community owes its very survival to the Jinakanchi matha.

The Bhattarakas were well versed in jaina philosophy, ethics, epics, stories and texts for worship. They imparted their knowledge to the lay followers and children.

At Jinakanchi matha a regulár school was conducted and children were taught all subjects and languages. In ancient days a number of palm leaf manuscripts were prepared for use in this school. Even now more than 100 palm leaf manuscripts are available in the Matha.[24]

Jinakanchi matha throughout its history contributed a great deal to the advancement in various fields of culture of the Tamil Jain Community.

Jinakanchi matha has donated lands for establishing school and hospital in Chittamur.

The Bhattarakha was approached to sort out domestic and public disputes of the Tamil Jains. Till recently scholarships were given to the poor students to pursue higher education.

Since the majority of the Tamil Jain community were agriculturists, the vagaries of Nature affected them adversely. At such times of drought the Jinakanchi matha helped them with the supply of paddy. The income of the math was mainly from the agricultural lands it held which is about 150 acres.

At present the annual festivals including car festival is conducted regularly.

Jinakanchi math, contributed immersely in the fields of religious and social welfare of the Tamil Jain community. Due to modernization and wide spread distribution of the Tamil Jain Community, the grip of the Jinakanchi math is gradually weakened.

The erudite Bhattarakas with resourcefulness prevented the desertion of a substantial number of the followers in the face of the upheaval of the rivals. Now it is the urgent duty of the Tamil Jain Community to revive the old glorious tradition and revitalize the Jinakanchi Matha.

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12

Socio-Religious Consciousness of the Jainas in Tamilnadu : An Archaeological Appraisal

A. Ekambaranathan

Jainism has had a long but chequered history over a period of two thousand years in the southern part of peninsular India. It played a dominant role in the socio-cultural milieu of the Tamils and had left an indelible mark on the thought and life of the people. A plethora of Jaina archaeological vestiges such as natural caves resorted to by recluses, temples, sculptures, paintings and inscriptions found throughout Tamilnadu, throws welcome light on the socio-religious life of the Digambara community. This paper attempts to explain as to how archaeological evidence supplement our knowledge about the conscious efforts of the monastics and lay followers in achieving the growth of Jainism from an early period down to medieval times.

Emerging Phase of Jainism

Jainism spread to South India a few centuries before the advent of the Christian era. In its early phase, it was simple and puritanic, and it inculcated mainly moral and ethical values in the mind of the common man. Much emphasis was laid on *ahimsa, asteya, satya* and *aparigraha* for the betterment of humanity. Benevolent bestowal of four-fold charity to the poor and needy was directly beneficial to the society at large. These social welfare measures coupled with the ceaseless efforts of the ascetics in spreading the message of the Tirthankaras to the public gained wider acclaim and popularity to Jainism in early Tamilnadu.

Ancient Tamil society, other than the brahmanas and ruling clans, consisted of mainly occupational groups like agriculturists,

cowherds, weavers, traders, smiths, capenters, potters, fisher folks, hunters etc.[1] Even among these groups, some kind of social hierarchy would have existed, although contemporary sources do not specify it. However, when Jainism permeated to the south, people from the above occupational groups embraced it, which in turn enabled them a higher social status. Admittance of these occupational groups without discrimination into its fold gained Jainism a wider social basis and got transformed it into an influential religion in early Tamilnadu. The new adherents organized themselves into a socially and religiously conscious group and faithfully followed the *sravakadharma*. Concommitantly, monastics of the Jaina *sangha* played a vital role in consolidating religion and in upbringing lay followers to a higher level.

This upward socio-religious trend is also reflected in early brahmi epigraphical records. For instance, the natural cave at Alagarmalai near Madurai was transformed into an astetic-abode with stone beds collectively by people like a salt merchant, a goldsmith, sugar merchant, a seller of plough-shares, cloth merchant and many others in the 2nd century B.C.[2] At Pugalur near Karur similar benefaction was made by a gold merchant, an oil-monger and others.[3] Besides, members of the merchant guild of Tiruvellarai,[4] some *kaviti*-title bearing officials,[5] a few *upasakas*[6] who performed religious rituals and more than fifty lay followers[7] whose occupations are not known, also made some contribution to the ascetic-abodes all over Tamilnadu.

Jaina friars were organised into *Sanghas*, which were headed each by a chief monk. Generally, early brahmi inscriptions contain names of chief monks and rarely of their disciples. Gani Nanda, Attirai, Senkasyapa and Venkasyapa were some of the chief monks who figure in early epigraphs. Gani Nanda and Attirai[8] were renowned monks whose religious activities centred around Madurai. Senkasyapa of Arrur was a very senior monk who looked after the monastic establishments at Pugalur.[9] The area around Tirunelveli witnessed the activities of Venkasyapa[10] while Tondur and its neighbourhood (Gingee area) was benefited by the services of Ilankasipa.[11] Nuns also had their due share of contribution to the growth of Jainism. One Sapamita (Sapamitra) was associated with Alagarmalai[12] and Sekkanti and her mother Sekkantanni with Neganurpatti near Gingee.[13] It may be added here that the epic

Silappadikaram glorifies the nun Kauntiadigal as a reputed person endowed with all virtuous qualities.[14] The yeomen service rendered by these monks and nuns was of no small measure and as a result, Jainism emerged into an influential religion in early Tamilnadu.

The increasing influence of Jainism on Tamil society also led to an intellectual spurt in the form of didactic works during the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. These didactic compositions, in turn, had a profound impact on the socio-cultural life of the early Tamils.

Setback and Resurrection

In the religious history of Tamilnadu, the 7th century witnessed the rapid growth of brahmanical religion, undermining the influence of Jainism and Buddhism. The bhakti-movement spear-headed by the Saiva Nayanmars and Vaishnava Alvars, coupled with the temple-building activities of the Pallava and early Pandya rulers brought about an unprecedented growth of Saivism and Vaishnavism.[15] The bhakti-saints strengthened their religion by consolidating people from different social groups, roused their religious feelings with devotional hymns extolling the greatness of Siva and Vishnu, and at the sametime, vehemently condemned the customs and practices of the Jainas and Budhhists.[16] Religious disputes to assert the supremacy of Saivism over Jainism seemed to have taken place at Madurai, Palaiyarai, Tiruvarur and Tiruvottur.[17] Thus, the bhakti-movement and royal patronage to Brahmanism adversely affected the growth of Jainism in the 7th century.

But soon, Jainism recovered from adversities and gained a fresh lease of life and vigour by adjusting itself to the circumstances and by accommodating some elements from Brahmanism without affecting its core. In this process of assimilation, importance was given to iconic and ritualistic worship of the Tirthankaras and their attendant deities.[18] Prominence was given to the worship of yakshis like Ambika and Padmavati. The early Jaina caves which lost glamour in the wake of bhakti movement were embellished with splendid iconic forms of Tirthankaras and yakshis, to which regular ritualistic worship was arranged. The awakened *sravakas* began to make a number of endowments in the form of land, gold, paddy, sheep etc., for the upkeep of these newly transformed monastic-cum-temple establishments.[19]

Simultaneously, construction of structural temples, dedicated

to Tirthankaras, was promoted in urban and semi-urban centres. While doing so, care was taken to follow the existing local Dravidian style of architecture without any change,. However, these temples differed only in their sculptural content from their Hindu counterparts. Festivals were also celebrated periodically, which integrated lay followers even from farflung Jaina centres. In all these endevaours, the ascetics consciously played a predominant role in setting the balance at equilibrium.

A galaxy of renowned monks like Vajranandi, Ajjanandi, Uttanandi, Naganandi, Kanaganandi, Arishtanemi, Pushpanandi, Gunasagaradeva and many others[20] had undertaken effective steps to propagate the gospel of the *Jina* throughout Tamilnadu, encouraged setting up of images of Tirthankaras and yakshis and thereby, accelerated the growth of religion. Thus, Jainism attained strength and wide popularity in the 8th and 9th centuries, to the extent of catering to the spiritual aspirations of the elite and the religious ferver of the lay followers.

Priority of Parsvanatha in Art

In medieval rock art of Tamilnadu, priority was given to Parsvanatha, although all the Tirthankaras are held equal in Jaina pantheon. As his iconic form (also of Suparsva) differs from the stereotype form of others, his images served as an effective visual medium to gain popular appeal amidst Jaina followers and to assuage the ill-feelings of the Vaishnavites. (Vishnu's head is canopied by the five hooded Sesha. Padmavati is Vishnu's consort). Moreover, the Kamata-episode also captivated the mind of the common man. That was why almost all the Jaina caves in the 8th – 9th century were sculpted with atleast one image of Parsvanatha, illustrating the Kamata-episode. Besides these, centres like Kalugumalai, Uttamapalayam, Kilakuyilkudi, Chitaral, Anantamangalam, and Valliamalai have recurrent versions of Parsvanatha carved on the facade of caves at the instance of monks. It has been rightly pointed out that the reason which compelled Jaina *acharyas* to encourage such image worship was to gain popularity among Jaina adherents, and at the same time, to remove brahmanical hatred against the Jainas.[21]

Popularization of Yakshi Cult

In order to overcome the adversity faced by Jainism in the 7th

century, some conscious efforts were taken by Jaina adherents to localize certain myths centering around yakshis and to popularize their cults. Although yakshis were accorded a minor position in the early period, since the 8th century, they were assigned an exhalted position. In this regard, ascetics themselves promoted the worship of Ambika and Jvalamalini and encouraged setting up of their images.

The life story of Ambika yakshi is dealt with elaborately in the Kannada works, *Ambikadevikalpa* and *Punyasravakatha*.[22] The very same story was localized by the Tamil Jainas and is said to have taken place at Tirumalai, the celebrated Jaina centre in Tiruvannamalai district. This localization of the Kannada myth was a sequel to the commissioning of a fine rock-cut image of Ambika at Tirumalai by the ascetic Aishtanemi acharya.[23]

Another Ambika-myth connects Akalankacharya of the *Mulasangha* with Karantai near Kanchipurm. It is stated that when Akalanka found it difficult to defeat the Buddhists in a polemical debate, Ambika yakshi, residing in the Karantai temple, came to his rescue to win over the opponents.[24] Apparently, this myth was introduced with the aim of popularizing Ambika cult.

The Kannada treatise, *Jvalamalinikalpa* composed in 939 A.D., narrates that Helacharya of the *Dravida Sangha* instituted the worship of Jvalamalini yakshi on Nilagiriparvata at Hemagrama in order to ward off a Brahamarakshasa who afflicted the acharya's lady disciple.[25] It is interesting to observe that this Kannada myth was suitably modified and associated with Ponnur near Vandavasi, mainly to popularize the worship of Jvalamalini.

Apart from localization of yakshi myths, splendid images of Ambika were carved in most of the caves in the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries all over Tamilnadu. Structural temples also contain either her stone images or metal icons. The cult of Jvalamalini was introduced in about the 18th century only, and thereafter, her images came to be consecrated in temples, first at Ponnur and then at other places. It deserves special mention that localization of yakshi-myths and introduction of yakshi images in caves and temples acted as catalysts not only to popularize their cults, but also to gain a wider social basis for Jainism and to sustain it at the time of adversity. Moreover, popularization of yakshi cult was found to be a desideratum to cope up with the growth of Amman cult in Hinduism.[26]

Economic Empowerment of Temples

During medieval period, every Jaina temple was endowed some kind of donation for its upkeep. Among the various types of donation, land grant was considered to be very important as it determined the economic power of the temple. In fact, after the 7th century A.D., in order to survive against brahmanical religion, it was found necessary to rejuvenate Jainism and strength its institutions through a conscious attempt of receiving land grants.[27] Although lithic records are replete with land donations, important Jaina temples at Tirupparuttikunram, Nagercoil, Chittamur, Tirunarungondai and Tirumalai received the maximum number of land grants[28] , Sometimes, an entire village was donated in favour of temples. For instance, the Varadhamana temple at Tirupparuttikunram and the temple Dharmapuri were donated the whole of Amanserkai village and Buduguru village respectively.[29] In case of the Appandainatha temple at Tirunarungondai, three villages such as Arrur, Enadimangalam and Ullur were granted in addition to several small land donations.[30] The Chola king Vikrama chola munificiently donated lands situated in more than twentyfive villages in favour of the Chittamur Parsvanatha temple.[31]

Besides land grants, sheeps, cows, gold, money etc., were also gifted to Jaina temples. The Kattampalli at Kurandi was donated with 155 sheep,[32] the Kalugumalai temple with 50 sheep[33] and the Tirunarungondai temple with 96 sheep and 40 cows.[34] Milk, curd and ghee obtained from these cattle were utilized for sacred ablution and for lighting lamps.

Land grants and other donations made in favour of temples were generally entrusted with ascetics who had supervisory control over religious institutions. It deserves special mention that most of the temples in medieval period were under the control of monks and they were assisted by some officials and temple-servants.

Consequent to economic empowerment of temples, some social welfare measures could be undertaken in their localities. Income obtained from the temple-lands was utilized for construction of tanks, canals, sluices etc.[35] and thereby regular water supply was provided to cultivable lands. This, in turn, enabled increase of agricultural productivity. Some times, renovation and repair works were carried out to temples from the revenue accrued out of the donations.

Four-fold Charities

The contribution of the Jainas for the upliftment of Tamil society was undoubtedly substantial and the same is testified to by archaeological evidence. The Jainas had deep faith in providing four-fold charities such as *aharadana* (food to the needy), *aushadadana* (medical help), *sastradana* (imparting education) and *abayadana* (offering protection) to the poor and needy people.

(a) Aharadana

Feeding the poor people is always considered to be a great service to humanity. Jainism laid special emphasis on providing food to the ascetics as well as the poor people. Although feeding of the poor is not explicitly referred to in inscriptions, provision made for feeding ascetics is commonly met with in them. It has been rightly said that "the life of the ascetic strongly appealed to the imagination of the people, and one of the common forms of religious charity was to provide for feeding, regular or occasional, of ascetics in temples or mathas"[36]

The Kalugumalai monastery had a large gathering of monks and nuns headed by Gunasagaradeva. In the year 865 A.D., some lands were donated to it for providing food to ten *Siddhanta bhattarakas* and *Vairagis* of the monasetry.[37] Yet another donation was also made in the same year for feeding five *Vairagis* and *bhattarakas*.[38] Similar provisions were also done in the temples at Kiraippakkam[39] and Tirumalai.[40] Besides, arrangement was also made to feed regularly itinerant monks who were not attached to the regular establishment of the temple as at Kilsattamangalam.[41]

When the nunnery at Vedal was not in a position to accommodate a very huge gathering of lady disciples and nuns, the Jaina adherents of the village came forward to provide food to all of them.[42]

Madavilagam near Tindivanam had a Jaina temple with a feeding house attached to it. In order to maintain this feeding-house, some tax-free lands were donated in 1128 A.D.[43] In all probability, this feeding-house served the purpose for those who came to the temple during festivals and on specific occasions.

(b) Medical Help

The Jaina community extending medical to the public is not alluded to in epigraphical records. However, the presence circular

pits cut into the live rock by the side of the ascetic abode at Melkudalur discloses that these were used to pound or grind medicinal herbs.[44] The polished inner surface of these pits would bear testimony to their regular use as mortars for preparing medicines. Similarly, shallow depressions with polished inner surface, as seen at Kalugumalai, should have served as querns to grind medicinal herbs.[45] Presumably, disciples of resident monks of the caves involved themselves in the preparation of herbal medicines for the benefit of the public. Besides these ascetics, professional physicians (*Maruttuvar*) existed in villages and towns and they rendered medical service to people. One such physician lived at the village Pugalalaimangalam, and his son Naranan is said to have setup images of Ambika yakshi and the preceptor Naganandi in the Jaina cave at Panchapandavamalai near Arcot-town.[46] The aforesaid evidence, though not numerous, stand in support for the medical help rendered by the Jainas to the public.

(c) Free Education

The natural caves occupied by Jaina recluses, were generally known as *pallis*, which term literally means abodes of monks as well as schools. These caves became centres of learning in the early and medieval periods. As the chief monk imparted religious education to his disciples, these caves were designated as *pallis*. A huge stone-bed or a square seat cut within the cave served as a platform (*sila-dala*), wherefrom the preceptor expounded *Jaina-sastras* to his disciples. Such specimens are reported from caves at Sittannavasal, Melkudalur, Uranitangal and Sarakkumalai. Parasena and Simhanandibhattara were the presiding monks at Uranitangal and Sarakkumalai respectively.[47] Vasudeva Siddhantabhattaraka, an expert in *Jaina-Siddhanta*, was associated with the monastic establishment at Karuppankunru.[48]

The Kalugumalai monastery, presided over by Gunasa-garadeva was an important religious and educational centre in Southern Tamilnadu, to which a large number of monks and nuns even from far-flung Jaina villages thronged in the 9th and 10th centuries. In order to propagate Jaina principles to the disciples and lay followers, this monastery had ten *Siddhanta-bhattarakas*.[49] Obviously, these *Bhattarakas* together with the chief monk had dedicated themselves for the promotion of religious education.

Sometimes, sheds were specially erected in front of the caves

for the convenience of the large gathering of Jaina adherents who assembled there to listen to the expositions of monks. Rows of post-holes cut into the open rock surface by the side of the caves as at Anantamangalam and Atchipakkam, both near Tindivanam, testify to the erection of sheds to accommodate lay followers.[50] The Malainatha temple at Melchittamur had a speciallay built mandapa known as *Otturaikkum mandapa* for expounding Jaina texts to the laity. Such expositions were held during evening hours and hence, provision was made for lighting a lamp in the same mandapa.[51]

Apart from these, Jaina monasteries existed at urban centres like Tiruppatiripuliyur (Cuddalore) and Tirupparuttikunram (Kanchipuram). The renowned monk Saravanandi is said to have completed the Digambara text, *Lokavibhaga* in the Tiruppatiripuliyur matha.[52] The Saiva saint Tirunavukkarasar (Appar) in his early days was a Jaina and learnt *Jaina-sastras* in the same monastery.[53] The Tirupparuttikunram alias *Jinakanchi matha* was presided over by Vajranandi in the 6th century and subsequently a succession of monks of the *Nandisangha* order continued play a leading role at this place. Later on, reputed ascetics like Chandrairtidevar, Mallisena, Pushpasena and others adorned the pontifical seat of this *matha*.[54] In about the 16th century, it was re-established at Melchittamur, and continues to exist even now. These *Vidhyasthanas* promoted the cause of religion and education throughout the period of their history.

Jainism gave much importance to education of women also. An educational institution exclusively meant for women existed at Vedal near Vandavasi in the 9th century. Actually, it was a nunnery presided over by the chief-nun Kanagavirakuratti. Initially, it functioned from a cave and subsequently, it was enlarged with structural additions. Being a unique institution, it had as many as four hundred women-ascetics (*tapasivins*) and five hundred women-students (*manakki*) on its roll. But as it was not sufficient to accommodate all of them and meet their food-requirements, the inhabitants of vedal undertook to provide food for all of them in 885 A.D.[55]

Although the above mentioned caves and *mathas* served as educational institutions, the various subjects expounded to the disciples and laity do not find epigraphical corroboration. However, lithic documents from Karnataka testify to imparting of subjects

like philosophy, logic, didactics, medicine, mathematics etc., by learned *acharyas* to disciples.[56]

(d) Asylum for the Distressed

The Jainas had munificiently setup asylums in some villages inorder to offer protection to those who were affected by natural calamities, epidemic diseases, war etc., these asylums were known as *"anjinan pukalidam"*. Jambai, near Tirukkoilur, was declared as an asylum for the distressed people in the year 1152 A.D., by the ascetic Neminatha who was in-charge of the local Jaina temple.[57] Similar asylums existed at Nallur near Tirumalai[58] and at Pattinam near Palladam. Buildings of the Pattinam asylum were repaired and renovated by some members of a merchant guild. Besides, some donations were also given to the same asylum for its maintenance.[59]

Even though inscriptions refer to the existence of asylums for the distressed people, their nature of functioning, measures under taken to redress the grievances of the affected people etc., are not known from them. However, it may be inferred that those people were given shelter, free food and medical help till they were relieved off from miseries.

Conclusion

An appraisal of archaeological sources reveals that Jainism spread to Tamilnadu around the 3rd century B.C. Soon, it became a fairly influential religion due to the concerted efforts of ascetics and it accommodated traders, artisans, craftsmen and others in its fold without discrimination. While the ascetics adhered to severe austerities, the house-holders faithfully practised a simple and dharmic life. Royal support to Jainism was extended by a few members of the ruling families of the Pandyas, Irumporai branch of Cheras and Chieftains like Atiyaman Nedumananji of Dharmapuri area and Kaniman of Mamandur area. Madurai and its neighbourhood became the hub of religious activities in the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C. The growing influence of Jainism led to a spurt of intellectual activity, reflected in the form of didactic works and one of the twin epics *Silappadikaram*, composed by Jaina poets.

With the passage of time, Jainsm suffered a severe setback in the 7th century A.D., consequent to the tremendous growth of brahmanical religion in the wake of bhakti-movement and extensive royal support to it. Besides, the large scale building of brahmanical

temples by the Pallavas and early Pandyas rulers provided a strong institutional basis for their religion. Despite these, Jainism could regain from adversities and had a new lease of life in the 8th century A.D. The Jaina response to the brahmanical challenge was successfully met with by adopting iconic and ritualistic forms of worship and by transforming their temples into a socio-religious institutional base. Thus, "the religion of severe austerities transformed into one of devotional cults and rituals which had the capacity to incorporate popular elements and adapt itself to new socio-religious contexts."[60]

The Jaina monks consciously promoted the fortunes of religion and encouraged setting up of images of Tirthankaras and attendant deities, particularly the yakshis. The popularization of yakshi cult, land grants and other donations made to temples by the laity, patronage extended by some Chola monarchs and their feudatory chieftains etc., accelerated the growth of Jainism. The economic empowerment of temples not only strengthened the religion but also provided a consolidated social basis for Jainism till the close of the 13th century A.D.

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13

The Jain Concept of *Jiva Daya* with Reference to Terrorism, Ecological Issues and Global Warming

Murugesan

Introduction

Jean Rostand said that killing of people in the history is portrayed as, "Kill a man, and you are an assassin. Kill millions of men, and you are a conqueror". Today the world is threatened by terrorism in the name of religion, caste, race, colour, sex, nation, culture etc. and the whole humanity is dying by the slow poison of global warming as such. Human beings are more violent towards their fellow human beings and the nature as such. Terrorism is more dangerous and common threat to all nations in a wider sense and it is very serious in the United States of America and India today. For example on 11th September 2001 terrorists attacked and demolished World Trade Organization (WTO) in USA and on 26th November 2008 and lasted until 29th November 2008 terrorists attacked in the Hotel Taj, Mumbai, and killed 173 people and wounding at least 308. Killing of innocent people, suicide bombs, destroying harmony, peace and public properties of societies are consequences of terrorism.

The world is not only threatened by the terrorism, and also it is threatened by the nature such as the ecological issues and global warming. The danger of global warming and ecological issues like air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution, soil contamination, deforestration are the consequences of human beings violence towards the nature. However, we should remember that two of the greatest challenges before the world today Terrorism and Climate Change are both manifestations of violence. It is the responsibility of human beings to expose their compassion and love

towards their fellow human beings, and to react against ecological issues especially global warming today. It is an attempt to bring out the peculiarity, importance and relevance of Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* in the context of terrorism and ecological issues with the special reference to the global warming.

The Jain Concept of *Jiva Daya*

The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* is rooted in a host of positive aims and actions which have great relevance to contemporary environmental concerns. In a wider sense Jains believe that violence in thought and speech is as bad as physical violence, so they try to control things like anger, greed, pride and jealousy.[1] Jains also believe that getting others to do harm, or allowing others to do harm, is as bad as doing harm yourself.

Definition of the term *Jiva Daya*

The term *Daya* means compassion, empathy and charity, therefore, the concept *Jiva Daya* means compassion to all living beings. The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* includes components of forgiveness, promotion of tolerance, be compassionate, charity, working for peace, protection of the environment, kindness to animals, life of contentment and discipline etc,.[2] In other words *Jiva Daya* means caring, sharing, tending, protecting and serving all living beings. Thus, the *Jiva Daya* strongly denotes universal friendliness (*maitri*), and universal forgiveness (*kshama*).

Peculiarities of *Jiva Daya*

The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* is one of the peculiar concepts of Jainism. Because the concept of *Jiva Daya* is to be without harm, utterly harmless, and not only to oneself but also to others in all forms of life which is from the largest mammals to the smallest bacteria. According to Jainism the life is co-equal to soul, and it is sacred regardless of faith, caste, race, or even species. Therefore, the Jain understanding of *Jiva Daya* does not injure abuse, oppress, enslave, insult, torment, torture or kill any creature or living beings. Moreover, the concept of *Jiva Daya* that is compassion towards all living beings includes the other peculiar qualities of *Parasparopagraho Jivanam* which is inter-connectedness of all life, and *Maitri* which means friendship with all beings.

Parasparopagraho Jivanam

Parasparopagraho Jivanam means Interdependence of living

beings or in other words inter-connectedness of all life. Lord Mahavir proclaimed a profound truth, "One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation disregards his own existence which is entwined with them."[3] The Jain concept of *Parasparopagraho Jivanam* strongly emphasizes that loving all living creatures and living peacefully with one another and with ecology too.

Maitri

The term *Maitri* means friendship with all beings. According to Jainism as a human being must love one another and not only that this love should be extended to animals, plants and to all tiniest living creatures in the world. So that the world would be filled with joy, peace and harmony among all living beings. Jitubhai Shah said, "*Ahimsa* or nonviolence is not only non-killing, it also means that one's attitude must be of *maitri* (amity) and peace. The real meaning of *ahimsa* is *maitri*."[4]

Importance of *Jiva Daya*

The Jain understanding of *Jiva Daya* has a significant importance to any individual, group, community, nation etc., today. The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* leads to a sensitive way of living styles such as kindness to animals, vegetarianism, self restraint and the avoidance of waste, and charity etc.

Kindness to Animals and Nature

One of the significant importances of *Jiva Daya* includes all forms of cruelty to animals and nature. Many centuries ago, Jains condemned the common practice of animal sacrifice to gods as an evil attitude of human beings. The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* does not captive, torture, kills animals and also should not be in any form of violent towards nature. Instead, *Jiva Daya* gives importance to take care, respect and compassionate to animals and nature, the opposite of this attitude is considered as violence. The kindness to animals goes one step ahead in Jainism that Jains do not use products which are made from dead animals. The ancient Jain scripture, Achaaraang Sutra says that 'one should not cause injury to any living being, including the tiniest creatures and plants. All life depends on nature for survival.'[5] Thus disturbing the ecological balance by wasting natural resources and polluting water, air and soil are also considered as a form of violence.

Vegetarianism

Vegetarianism is another form of *Jiva Daya* in Jainism. Most Jains are lacto-vegetarians but more devote Jains do not eat root vegetables because this would involve the killing of plants. Instead they focus on eating beans and fruits, whose cultivation do not involve killing of plants. Some particularly dedicated individuals are fruitarians. Honey is forbidden, because its collection is seen as violence against the bees. Some Jains do not consume plant parts that grow underground such as roots and bulbs, because tiny animals may be killed when the plants are pulled up. Thus the Jains are very strong in vegetarianism.[6]

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vegetarianism - cite_note-132

Life of Contentment and Discipline

The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* leads to the life of contentment and discipline. Accumulation of possessions and enjoyment for personal ends should be minimized. Endeavor to live a life of moderation and restraint and to practice a measure of abstinence and austerity. Regular periods of fasting for self purification are encouraged. In their use of the earth's resources, Jains are very much sensible and reasonable. For example one's own needs should be reduced, desires controlled and consumption levels kept within reasonable limits. Using any resource beyond one's needs and misuse of any part of nature is considered a form of theft.

Humanitarian Activities

One of the important aspects of *Jiva Daya* is humanitarian activities. According to Jainism there are nine *punyas* (good karma) some of which are *anna daan* (donation of food), *jal daan* (donation of water), *vastra daan* (donation of clothes) etc., and very interestingly these *punyas* includes *pashu daan* for the welfare of animals.[7] The humanitarian activities are in various forms such as, starting and maintaining schools, colleges, hospitals, clinics, lodging houses, hostels, orphanages, relief and rehabilitation camps for the handicapped, old, sick and disadvantaged as well as hospitals for ailing birds and animals. Out of compassions Jains give donations and work as volunteer in different types of humanitarian activities.

Relevance of *Jiva Daya*

According to Jainism the self-awakened man respects the life

of others as precious as his/her. Live and Let Live is the central philosophy and the fundamental tenet of Jainism. On 10th January 2009 after Inaugurating *Jain International Trade Organization (JITO)* Global Summit at Ahmedabad, Gujarat, L.K. Advani said, ĀgIt is when we reflect on the challenge of Climate Change that we begin to appreciate the enormous contemporary relevance of the Jain philosophy of ahimsa and Jiva Daya. We realize that Bhagwan Mahavir and the other Jain Tirthankars were great environmental conservationists. They taught us that we human beings are merely trustees of this planet. We need to re-learn their teachings in our times. If we do so, we realize that eco-friendliness is not a mere fashionable phrase, it has to be interwoven into our development paradigm and also into our day-to-day living. In a sense, we all have to become adivasis or tribals who know how to exist in harmony with the earth. The earth takes care of us, and so we have to take care of her. In this sense, Jainism is the most ancient Green Movement in world history."[8] In fact, the Jain concept of Jiva Daya is more relevant in India and around the world in the life-threatening context of terrorism, ecological issues and the global warming.

Terrorism and *Jiva Daya*

The Dynamism of Religion and Terrorism

Someone said like this "Religion is one of the most powerful forces that can affect human behavior. For centuries, religious beliefs have led to countless murders." Religious beliefs and the willingness of people to die for these beliefs rather than compromise have led to wars in the name of religion for centuries. Modern day devotion to religion follows the same pattern. Many believers are intensely committed to their specific religion. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Islamic religious terrorism is the most serious form of all terrorism worldwide.

Terrorism is not a pleasant enterprise either to the one who executes it or to the one it is targeted to. By design, terrorism is an unpredictable use of violence against an individual, group, community, or nation to attain the goal of the perpetrators. Its aim may include overthrowing, destabilizing, or replacing the existing systems and institutions or retaliating for the hurt and harm committed. Arundhati Roy, a novelist, states: "Nothing can excuse or justify an act of terrorism, whether it is committed by religious

fundamentalists, private militia, people's resistance movements- or whether it's dressed up as a war of retribution by a recognized government. The bombing of Afghanistan is not revenge for New York and Washington. It is yet another act of terror against the people of the world. Each innocent person that is killed must be added to, not set off against, the grisly toll of civilians who died in New York and Washington."[9] So from the above statement, if anything killing of people is in the form of terrorism and not only by religious fundamentalism.

Obviously, the numerous researches dedicated to the problem of religious terrorism provide ample information about the essence of this problem. It is really important that many specialists attempt to find out historical roots of terrorism in the past and link it to the present moment. Furthermore, it is also important that nowadays the danger of terrorism is perfectly realized not only by political leaders but by ordinary people as well, and, what is more, this problem is thoroughly researched on the highest level. This is why it is possible to hope that in the nearest future the effective solution of this problem of terrorism may be found.

Jiva Daya as a Remedy for Terrorism

The Jains understanding of *Jiva Daya* would be very appropriate to the life-threatening context of terrorism in the world today. Because one of the tenets of Jainism is that all living beings desire life and not death. No one has the right to take away the life of any other being; to kill a living being is the greatest of sins. Life is dear to everyone, and we must respect life. The Jains understanding of *Jiva Daya* is living a life of loving, helping, and caring others to lead a peaceful and happiest life. Just as the head of a family looks after the welfare of the members of the family, one must look after the welfare of his or her own fellow beings and other lower orders of creations in the world. Therefore, the Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* teaches to love, help, and care others as one's own self and wounding others is wounding to one's own self, this principle of *Jiva Daya* would be a possible remedy for the terrorism in the world today.

Ecological Issues, Global Warming and *Jiva Daya*

Ecological Issues and Global Warming

The word "ecology" comes from the Greek noun, "oikos" which

means, the house, or the home or the family. It also means the household or the inhabited earth. In a broader spectrum it can refer to earth as family or household. In any case, it refers not to empty earth but earth inhabited by people, animals, birds, fish and the plants. If we retain this concept of "familiness" or oneness in humanity it will serve as a deterrent for us. It will enable us to safeguard and protect our environment for each other.[10]

Ozone forms a protective cover the earth, guarding it from deadly ultra-violet rays of the sun. It absorbs a range of ultra-violet radiation that harms human beings. But this very property has caused increase in atmospheric temperatures. Excess of this air pollution has resulted in making holes in the protective ozone layer in our atmosphere. This "global warming" (rise of earth's surface temperature). It is expected that the temperature on the earth will increase in the coming years.[11] Moreover, this increase of temperature causes melting of ice berks in Atlantic which results the raise of sea level. The danger of global warming and ecological issues like air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution, soil contamination, deforestration are the consequences of human beings violence towards the nature.

Interdependence of Human Beings and Environment

Ecology being the science concerned with all of life and its surroundings, it deals with organisms of all types, their habits and behaviors, life styles and relationships to surroundings or to the environment. It also deals with inorganic matter. Life and environment are interdependent. The human, animal and plant life is influenced by environmental factory and they in turn affect the environment in positive or negative ways. Human has the ability to control or destroy his or her environment. For instance, factors like environmental pollution, population explosion, use of pesticides, excessive use of natural resources, and hole in the ozone layer are some of the misdeeds of humankind that has adversely affected our environment. Awareness of factors affecting our environment around us is significant.[12]

Pollution or contaminations of air, water, and land with harmful living microbes and chemicals released from industries and over-populated cities have become so serious that now it is a matter of life or death for us in this generation. If so, what about the future generations? What kind of earth are we going to leaves

as legacy for our descendants? This problem has moral implication. There are many environmental challenges. Human beings have added to this through wars, use of unclear weapons, biological warfare, industrial waste, increased use of automobiles which run on petroleum and gas products, deforestation, and pollution creating holes in the protective ozone layer in the atmosphere. These dangers cannot be simply overlooked.

Relevance of Jiva Daya in the Light of Ecological Issues and Global Warming

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Our world has enough for each person's need but not for his or her greed."[13] Environmental pollution has reached alarming levels in the last five years, industries and automobiles being the main culprits. The need of the hour is to draw a balance between property and pollution, international action and environmental concerns. Pollution has become a major ecological problem today. This is not just intellectual effort or government effort or even efforts made by few welfare organizations but also moral effort that needs to be taken up on a war-footing.

Jain cosmology recognizes the fundamental natural phenomenon of symbiosis or mutual dependence, which forms the basis of the modern day science of ecology. It is relevant to rethink about the Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* today. Jains strongly believe that all living creatures depend on each other. Jain advocates that "All life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence."[14] Lord Mahavir said, "One who neglects or disregards the existence of earth, air, fire, water and vegetation disregards his own existence which is entwined with them."[15] According to Jainism Human beings are responsible to take care of the earth and must be compassionate toward environments.

The Jain beliefs of *Parasparopagraho Jivanam* which means all life is bound together by mutual support and interdependence is refreshingly contemporary in its premise and perspective. It defines the scope of modern ecology while extending it further to a more spacious home. It means that all aspects of nature belong together and are bound in a physical as well as a metaphysical relationship. Life is viewed as a gift of togetherness, accommodation and assistance in a universe teeming with interdependent constituents. Moreover, the concept of *Jiva Daya* is very much helpful to use of

the earth's resources much sensible and reasonable and warns people to realize wasting and creating pollution are acts of violence.

A Critical Analysis on *Jiva Daya* in Jainism Today

The positive aspects of *Jiva Daya* in Jainism are friendliness and compassion. A person with friendliness and compassion will be able to integrate non-violence in their daily lives. Positive thinking has an auspicious effect on ecology. On the other hand, negative thinking such as cruelty, jealousy, and contempt has a bad effect on human health as well as on ecology. The essential requisites for ecological balance are the practice of non-violence, self-restraint and controlling unlimited luxury and lust. Here I would like to bring out the positive and possible ways to develop *Jiva Daya* in the world today.

Some of the Best Examples for *Jiva Daya* in Jainism Today

The following examples are for *Jiva Daya* in Jainism today, such as:

- Mumbai-based Diwaliben Mohanlal Mehta Charitable Trust which is located in Mumbai, runs thirty boarding schools for girls in Maharashtra and Gujarat, a residential school for blind girls, and a home for destitute women. The trust also sponsors patients for treatment.
- A hospital exclusively founded for birds in Delhi. It is called Charity Birds Hospital which was founded by Laccho Mal Jain in 1929. He would sit in the temple every evening and often see birds fly into the temple's ceiling and get hurt. Looking to relieve their suffering, he devoted one room in his house for treating sick birds. Today, this hospital is built in two floor building and has a separate floor for convalescing birds.
- Karuna International organization is sponsored by Ahimsa Research Foundation and supported by several Animal Welfare Organizations. One of the major functions of Karuna International is to establish **Karuna Clubs** in a large number of schools and colleges. They have been successful in spreading the message of kindness, compassion and values of life in the student community.
- Adinath Jain Trust which is located in Chennai supports every year around two crores of rupees to poor and needy people without any religious, caste, sex discriminations.

- Moreover, Jainism as a religion did not, does not and will not involve any religious war, violence, fundamentalism or fanaticism. Jainism is the forerunner of *Jiva Daya* in the world.

Some Possible Ways to Develop *Jiva Daya* in the World Today

Even though Jainism holds a strong concept of *Jiva Daya* but it did not reach other common people to understand and practice *Jiva Daya*. Following reasons may help us to spread the concept of *Jiva Daya* among all people in the world today, such as

Praxis Oriented Commitment

Once Mahatma Gandhi said that ĀgWe *cannot know nonviolence in theory. The one and the only way to understand nonviolence is to practice it."*[16] As a compassionate Jain are must commit his or her life to spread the concept *Jiva Daya* by practicing and preaching. The word praxis could be understood as "transformation an idea into action," because praxis includes both preaching and doing. This praxis oriented commitment must include the positive elements of working for justice, peace, liberation, and freedom etc.

Every Individual as a Trust

Each and every individual of Jain and the follower of *Jiva Daya* must act like a trust and do charitable works. It is not just donating some money to some trusts and limiting the *Jiva Daya* but also be compassionate to others in our day today life. In other words, one must look after the welfare of his or her own fellow beings and other lower orders of creations in the world, so that we may able to serve many massively.

Helping People to Unveil *Jiva Daya*

As a compassionate Jain, one must help people to unveil *Jiva Daya* in their lives. The dialogue goes like this, grandfather said to his grandson that there is a war going on within me that is a war between compassion, love and violence, hatred; this war is not only within me and also within you and all other human beings too. Then the grandson asked the grandfather that who will win the war, the grandfather answered that the one which is fed. So *Jiva Daya* is in all human beings but it is veiled and people one who is aware of *Jiva Daya* especially, the Jain community must help people to unveil this *Jiva Daya* today, so that we may be able to bring out some possible remedies to religious fundamentalism, terrorism, ecological issues and global warming.

Conclusion

The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* is one of the peculiar, important and relevant contributions to the human kingdom. Because it emphasizes very practical aspects of forgiveness for all living beings and that they have sought and received the forgiveness of all beings, that they crave the friendship of all beings, that all beings give them their friendship and that there is not the slightest feeling of alienation or enmity in their heart for anyone or anything. Thus, the Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* gives importance to forgiveness and friendliness may reign throughout the world and that all living beings may cherish each other.

Dr. L. M. Singhvi, an eminent jurist and Jain scholar, strongly holds that "Jainism is fundamentally a religion of ecology and has turned ecology into a religion. It has enabled Jains to create an environment-friendly value system and code of conduct. Because of the insistence on rationality in the Jain tradition, Jains are always ready and willing to look positively and with enthusiasm upon environmental causes. In India and abroad, they are in the forefront of bringing greater awareness and putting into practice their cardinal principles on ecology. Their programs have been modest and mostly self-funded through volunteers."[17] Jainism is a religion of compassion, universal love and friendliness. It aims at the welfare of all living beings, nature and not only human beings. The Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* is one of the best possible remedies for terrorism, ecological issues and global warming. It is the responsibility of human beings to expose their compassion and love towards their fellow human beings, and to act against the ecological issues especially global warming today. Let us hold on the central principle of *Jiva Daya* that is, "loving all living beings." Moreover, let us commit ourselves to practice and proclaim the Jain concept of *Jiva Daya* in our day today lives and be a role model to our fellow human beings.

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14
Jains' Engagement in Social Work

Shugan C Jain

1.0 Preamble

May my desire be ever for dealings fair and straight?

May my heart only delight in doing well to others to the best of my abilities in my life!

May I always entertain a feeling of friendliness for all living beings in the world?

May the spring of sympathy in my heart be ever bubbling for those in agony and affliction?[1]

The above four lines have been extracted from the daily prayer of Jain householders which show their heart pouring OUT for social engagements for the well being of the society.

Further even the three distinguishing characteristics of a Jina (the perfect being whose sermons Jains practice) include *Hitopadeśa* or delivering sermons for well being of the society [2]

The above verses and statements show that the Jains, though engaged in self improvement and spiritual purity, do so by keeping the welfare of the society in their mind uppermost.

2.0 Jain Doctrine

The word Jain is derived from Jina, a person who has attained supreme soul status by conquering his sensual inclinations/ tendencies so as to be able to meditate and enjoy his own nature of infinite knowledge and bliss. The followers of the path shown by Jinas are called Jains. Thus the entire doctrine of Jainism centers on self improvement, with due consideration to the well being of the society they live in, till the perfect state or *nirvāṇamokṣa* is attained. The mokṣa mārga, or the path of spiritual purification[3] propounded by Jinas is said to be the trinity of right faith, knowledge and conduct

together. Right belief and knowledge are given highest importance as without them the conduct also cannot be termed as right.

On the social front, the impact of self improvement on society is explained by Jainācārya Tulsi in the following words: "If one improves himself, then the family will improve; if the family improves the society improves and if the society improves the country will improve and if the country improves the world improves". So the emphasis in Jainism is continuous self improvement till the ultimate objective of attaining perfection i.e. *nirvāṇa /mokṣa* or liberation is attained.

The three pillars of Jain way of life are:

- *Ahiṃsā* or non-violence in conduct
- *Aparigraha* or non-possession in life style
- *Anekānta* or pluralism /multiplicity of viewpoints in thoughts

Jain community was organized by Lord Mahāvīra, the latest tīrtha?karas of Jains and whose sermons form the Jain doctrine today, in four fold sub-communities, namely:

- *Sādhus* or monks
- *Sādhvis* or nuns
- *Śrāvakas* or male householders.
- *Śrāvikās* or female householders

The first two live a totally detached (from worldly affairs) life practicing *mokṣa-mārga,* while the last two lead the life of common citizens but practicing the same vows as of monks but partially and setting their own pace for spiritual purification. Thus they idolize and follow the monks and wish to become monks ultimately.

The path of spiritual purification for monks consists of completely observing five major vows called *Mahāvratas* which are:

- *Ahiṃsā,* i.e. non-violence or abstinence from violence
- *Satya,* i.e. abstinence from speaking the lie.
- *Acaurya,* i.e. abstinence from stealing or taking other's things without their permission.
- *Aparigraha,* i.e. Non possession or abstinence from excessive possessions
- *Brahmacarya,* i.e. celibacy or staying absorbed in pure soul's nature

These vows are very important from the social point of view also as non-observance of these is termed as sins (pāpa) causing miseries not only in this but future lives also. This is an extremely important consideration to ensure adherence of the vows in the minds of the followers so that they abstain from committing these sins and making them as a basic requirement to progress on the path of liberation. The followers required to perform six essential duties daily[4] are: practice state of equanimity with soul, reciting virtues of 24 tīrtha?karas or ford-makers, veneration of the holy teachers, visiting the mistakes committed and seeking punishment or forgiveness develop feeling of separateness of body and soul.

The householders also observe the above vows but termed as minor vows (Aṇuvratas) for them and daily essential duties but partially e.g. the last vow *of brahmacarya* for householders is called *svadāra-santoṣa* or contentment with one's religiously married wife. Similarly in the essential duties of householders we see charity i.e. sharing own life and wealth with society as an essential duty for householders. To further emphasize social works or responsibilities in Jainism, one should read the daily prayer of Jains called *'Merī Bhāvanā'* which promotes social interactions of Jains at different levels. Further 'Right belief' the first essential requirement to follow and practice the path of spiritual purification has eight limbs; the first four are to enforce discipline on the practitioner himself and the last four[5] i.e. Protecting, Promoting stability, disinterested affection, Illuminating or enhancing the Jaina ideology emphasizes social responsibilities of the practitioners.

Apollononius Tyaneaus, Greek traveler of first century BC beautifully describes Jains as follows:

In India I found a race of mortals living upon the earth but not adhering to it, inhibiting cities but not being fixed to them, possess everything but possessed by nothing.

Thus Jains are known for their generosity and sharing their wealth earned and do not get obsessed by it.

3.0 Mahāvīra's Social Engineering[6]

The present presiding deity of Jains is Mahāvīra, who attained liberation some 2535 years ago. Even though he hailed from a rich family, yet he gave up all his worldly wealth to activate divine knowledge associated with his soul and free himself from the cycle

of birth-death-birth. We also see from his sermons and his own life style that he was aware of the social ills prevailing and hence initiated steps to overcome these. Some of the examples of his actions/sermons with social overtones are discussed below.

3.1 Metaphysical

His definition of reality as endowed with permanence, origination and destruction i.e. persistence with change or being and becoming was remarkable in bringing various monist thinkers together and eliminate or minimize the violence indulged in by followers of different faiths. He thus declared both materialistic and mental things as everlasting existents.

3.2 Socio-Ethical Method

He affected tremendous social change through the promulgation of the socio-ethical values of *Ahiṃsā, Aparigraha* and *Anekānta*.

Ahiṃsā: In *Ācārāṅga*[7] he says 'None of the living beings ought to be killed or deprived of life ought to be ruled or enslaved or possessed or put to unrest'. Further in *Praśnavyākaraṇa*[8] he designates social *Ahiṃsā* as kindness, compassion, security, fearlessness and so on. Social *Ahiṃsā* of Mahāvīra begins with the awareness of the existence of others and their right to exist like one's own. He says that all living beings, like you, do not wish to have pain nor do they wish to die resulting in the current Jain slogan 'Live and let live' or living beings cooperate with each other[9] is another Jain slogan reflecting this doctrine of social *Ahiṃsā* of Mahāvīra.

Aparigraha: Mahāvīra knew that the root cause of all ills associated with economic inequalities is disproportionate possession of wealth by few individuals. Thus he gave religious cum social overtones to non possession and asked his householder disciples to limit their possessions and share the rest (surplus) with others; while monks were asked to be free of any type of possessions (external or internal).

Anekānta: Mahāvīra realized that differences in opinions/viewpoints amongst different people emanate from their intellectual capabilities. These affect the social harmony more than economic or social inequalities. He thus said that differences in viewpoints emanate from the differences in the nature of things.

These different aspects of things are to be understood as different aspects of the TRUTH giving rise to his doctrine of *Nayavāda* or *Anekānta*.

3.3 Uplift of Women/ according them and the Downtrodden freedom for Religious Pursuits

His acceptance of food from a slave and destitute woman and making her the head of her nun community plus creating a separate community of nuns to practice religious activities was revolutionary in giving women the right to study and freedom to practice religion which was till then denied to them. This act greatly enhanced the prestige of women in the society and diverted the oppressed widows from the ills like burning of the widow on husband's pyre (satīprathā) or leading an oppressed life.

Similarly he declared that all living beings are equal rejecting the prevailing thinking of four fold division of society into warriors, *Brāhmaṇas*, traders and untouchables (*śudras*) by birth. He said one becomes great by his acts and not by birth. He opened his creed to all classes of not only human beings but all living beings. Samantabhadra rightly described his doctrine as *Sarvodaya* i.e. enlightenment of all.

3.4 Others

- Lord Mahāvīra propagated the doctrine of *Karma* to hold the individuals responsible for their acts and the results thereof rather than someone else up above.
- He used Prākṛta language or the language of commoners and women, to deliver his sermons so as to make them accessible to the masses and not just a few learned scholars.
- He extended the four fold vows (i.e. *Ahiṃsā, satya, acaurya* and *aparigraha*) to five fold i.e. bifurcate *aparigraha* into *aparigraha* and *brahmacarya*. He realized the importance of stressing celibacy as the men and women were becoming more prone to sexual attractions and indulgences.
- Making vegetarian and simple food in minimal quantities for sustenance as essential for spiritual and social uplift. Thus he rejected animal sacrifice or wanton killing of animals or destroying environment for physical pleasures or likes.

4.0 Jain Statistics and Demography

Jains total less than 5 million in India and another 2, 00,000 or

so overseas. So Jains form a miniscule of Indian population and yet they manage and contribute tremendously to the economic, social, cultural, educational and professional activities of the country. They are mostly concentrated in the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and national capital territory even though Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra hailed from eastern UP and Bihar. The last census of India showed that the literacy rate amongst Jains is almost 100% while more than fifty percent have undergraduate or higher university degrees. They believe in self effort; are religious, peace loving, philanthropic, non violent in nature and generally support the rulers of the day (e.g. Cāmuṇḍa Rāi in 10th century AD in Karnataka and Bhāmā Śāha in 16th century in Rajasthan and ministers of Jaipur from 15th century till 19th century AD). They follow the opportunities for worldly and spiritual uplift. In a way Jain community can be considered as a social model for enhancing economic and social well-being of all based on irrefutable moral and ethical values.

5.0 Social Engagements of Jains

The basic constituent of Jain society is community. We find small communities of Jains, each centered on a specific temple which serves as a hub for people of same lineage or following (teacher & sect). Such people visit temple daily for religious duties (one of the essential duties of the householder) as well as building social network (e.g. there are over 500 Jain temples and prayer halls (sthānakas) in Delhi and over 300 in Jaipur). The temple provides the catalyst for building small communities, primarily by women, for religious, social and family development. The men folk generally build specialized trade bodies for supporting each other and external interface with other societies and the government. Then the institution of monks and nuns (over 10,000 in India) play an important part to ensure that the followers are aware of their religious and social duties and learn more about them along with the doctrine. Thus the temple and the monks/nuns form the basic components of Jain community development or social work for Jains primarily. One will therefore find special institutions, side by side with major temples, like *upāśrayas* (for monks and nuns), *dharmaśālās* for travelers and poor/destitute, orphanages, Women's homes, libraries, schools and at times dispensaries/specialized small hospitals (e.g. birds' hospital at Lal Mandir, Delhi).

Pilgrim places like Nakoda (Rajasthan), Palitana (Gujarat), Parasnath (Jharkhand), Shri Mahavirji (Rajasthan) Shravanbelgola (Karnataka) and Hastinapur (UP) and hundreds of others also play an important role in enhancing social and religious duties of Jains.

Special mention is to be made of pilgrim towns like Shri Mahavirji (Rajasthan) and Shravanbelgola (Karnataka) where besides the holy temples and *dharmaśālās,* facilities for education, health services, homes for destitute and employment generation are being provided for local poor people in particular.

5.1 Jain Organizations Engaged in Social Works

i. Education

Statistics reveal that there are over 4400 schools all over India established and / or managed by Jains catering to 4- 5 million students of all age groups.

The schools range from top of the line (Pathways, Modern, Heritage in Delhi, DPS Aligarh, Mahavir in Jaipur to name a few) to very good (Mahāvīra, H.L. Jain, Mrigavati in Delhi) schools catering primarily to non-Jain students.

Similarly there are 100s of colleges in professions like engineering, medicine, management etc. established and run by Jains. S.P.Jain School of management in Mumbai is considered to be one of the finest management schools of India. Lately there is a rush to establish Jain universities (Mangalayatan, Prakrit at Shravanbelgola, and Jain Vishva Bharati in Rajasthan) as well as a premier management institute like Indian school of Business (Hyderabad) in Mumbai also.

Hundreds of Jain social organizations also offer scholarships to meritorious students for studying in schools and professional colleges (Sahu Jain trust, Mangalayatan, Kundakunda Kahan Trust at Sonagir and many more) along with prizes to meritorious students.

Perhaps one of the biggest contributors to the education field is Federation of Jain Educational Institutes Pune, who undertakes extensive projects to enhance the quality of education in schools they have improved the quality in the entire islands of Andaman and are now being solicited by states and overseas education systems.

ii. Health Including Food

Health services are another thrust area of social works undertaken by Jains. There are over 100 medium sized hospitals run by Jains, notable being Mahāvīra Cancer Hospital Jaipur, Durlabhji's hospital Jaipur and Sunder Lal Jains charitable hospital in North Delhi known for their health services. Jain hospitals are characterized as small ones, being run primarily by individuals or a private trust. Almost every Jain social organization holds annual special health check up and treatment camps (eyes particularly) in remote areas for weaker sections of the society. Jain doctors themselves around the world (especially from North America) hold many charitable medical camps (example Bidada Trust), Acharya Chandana Hospital systems, Leprosy center in Mysore etc.

Almost all big temples and Jain pilgrimage places have outpatient consulting services (more than 1000) with greater emphasis on alternative medicine systems (homeopathy, Āyurveda, naturopathy, reiki etc.).

Mahāvīra Vikalanga, Jaipur popularly known for its Jaipur foot is doing a tremendous job of providing almost free, artificial legs to amputees. They have crossed a million recipient marks already and are now extending their services in many countries overseas also. Please see case study or details.

Prekṣā meditation, simple type of Yoga cum meditation system promoted by Acharya Mahaprajna, is becoming very popular as an alternate system of treating diseases like cardio-vascular, diabetes, stress and to enhance concentration of people in their profession. Jain Vishva Bharati has set up extensive network of centers in India and abroad to offer treatment cum training for this. JVBI even offers post graduate degree in science of Living to over 300 students every year.

Jains being practitioners of non-violence are primarily vegetarians and hence preach through lectures, seminars and publicity media benefits of vegetarian diet. A number o animal shelters and homes/hospitals, like at Lal Mandir, Delhi, Pavagiri (Distt. Sirohi) in Rajasthan are shining examples of such Jain initiatives.

iii. Weaker Section of Society

There are a number of institutes, run primarily by individuals

or a religious body, all over India to provide training in crafts for women to become economically independents, orphanages, to provide monthly rations for sustenance of poor families and old age homes. Jain orphanage and Mahila Ashrama in Darya Ganj Delhi, Adinath Mahila Samiti Jaipur are some of the examples of such organizations. Then there are organizations like Phoolwati Trust in Delhi who run school for women particularly in Madangir Delhi and distribute rations for the poor people.

iv. Ecology, Disaster Management

Bhartiya Jain Sangathana of Pune undertakes extensive disaster rehabilitation program on a professional cum charitable basis. There are other Jain organizations, like Veerayatan are executing extensive project in Gujarat to completely rehabilitate a large section of people after the earthquake hit its Kutch area also. Almost all Jains and Jain organizations singly come forward whenever there is a need for assistance on such occasions. Concerning ecology, Jains preach their doctrine of *Ahiṃsā* as given by Mahāvīra wherein he talks of air, water, earth, fire and plants as one sensed living beings and need to be protected to be fully *ahiṇsaka.*

v. Research in Art, Philosophy and Religion, art Literature

Contribution of Jain in arts (Dilwara, Bahubali idol in Karnataka, Ellora caves, Udaygiri-Khandgiri caves in Orissa, Gopachal and Dev Garh in Madhya Pradesh, Jaisalmer temples etc) are shining examples of Jain contribution to Indian art heritage. Almost all museums of India are incomplete without having some relics of Jain heritage.

There are a number of institutes like Bharatiya Jnanpith in Delhi which not only publish literary woks but give world recognized awards to literary works annually also. Similarly *Ahiṃsā* award by Mahāvīra Foundation (Shri Sugalchand) in Chennai and a host of other individuals and organizations are given.

Jain's contribution to the literary world of India is tremendous. We find tremendous literature (philosophy, stories, poems, hymns. pj̃as etc) contributed by Jain monks and laity. Kural, Kannada literature in south are mostly Jain contributions. Similarly the other regional languages (such as Maharashtri, Gujarati, Magadhi and Shaurseni) and even Sanskrit have vast repertoire of Jain literature. This is also borne by the fact that today over 50 small and medium sized Jain research and publication institutions exist in India.

vi. Social Engineering

Jains have become aware of being united and to initiate steps to maintain their identity and further enhance well being of their and the society they live in. Jaina (Federation of Jain associations in North America) and JITO (Jain Trade and Industries Organizations in India) are such initiatives of Jains to achieve these and other social obligations; Young Jains of America and of India now, Federation of Jain social group in India, Jain Milan, Professional forums like Federation of Jain doctors, Jain Professionals etc are coming up to support fellow Jains by sharing knowledge and experience and then take community/social development projects also.

6.0 Social Works in Specialized Areas like HIV/ Aids

By social works, especially concerning HIV/AIDS, I feel they can be categorized as follows.

i. Preventive

- Abstinence
- Indulgence with caution

ii. Curative

Preventive works are sub-classified as abstinence and observing precautions while indulging. The abstinence and to some extent the precautionary measures are faith based and hence become the major thrust area for such social organizations. Here we take up briefly the burning social issues connected with sexually transmitted diseases.

Jains give very high importance to being celibate. The fifth *aṇuvrata,* called *Brahmacarya* or *svadāra-santoṣa vrata* for the householders, is defined as follows: [10]

To limit one's sexual activities to the married partner of opposite sex only. All other women are called as those who are married to others or are not married /owned by anybody else (e.g. unmarried women and prostitutes etc). The five flaws (or abstinences) of this vow are further given as follows:

- Indulgence in arranging marriage of others (other than own children or dependent brothers and sisters),
- to have sex by organs not meant for sexual activities (e.g. masturbation, homosexuality or oral sex etc),

- to make bodily or vocal gestures which provoke sex,
- to be mentally engaged profusely in sex and
- to deal or socialize with prostitutes or women with loose character.

To observe celibacy *Tattvārtha-sŧra* advices us to abstain from listening to stories arousing sex (or watching movies these days), to look or observe the sex arousing body parts of women, to reminiscence past activities, to give up eating aphrodisiac foods and to abstain from decorating own body.

Besides the above, Jain texts talk of sexual interactions primarily for pro-creation and ask its followers to avoid sexual activities on special and holy days and places (e.g. 8th and 14th of each fortnight, religious holy days and festivals and at pilgrim or religious places).

Such descriptions and importance assigned to celibacy exert special caution on Jains to abstain from sexual interactions. Thus Jains normally practice and preach (through educating and self examples) the preventive measures to avoid sexually transmitted diseases and evils.

For curing such diseases, Jains do set up hospitals and dispensaries but not specifically for such diseases. To provide social acceptance to patients, Jains have the six essential duties which include *Pratikramaṇa* (recalling mistakes and seek punishment and promise not to repeat them in future) and its *sarvodaya* doctrine.

7.0 Some Brief Case Studies

i. International School for Jain Studies, Delhi

International School for Jain Studies, ISJS, is a nonprofit non government organization founded in 2005 by Dr. Shugan C. Jain in India and Dr. Sulekh Jain and Prof. Cromwell Crawford in (USA). The main objective of ISJS is to impart academic studies of Jainism to university professors and research scholars from North America for preparing teachers and researchers in the west for further studies and teaching of Jainism for the well being of the societies there. Emphasis of studies is to analyze the doctrine to resolve present day issues affecting life style and resolution of social problems etc. So far over 300 scholars have attended the two month residential program conducted every year in summer for the last nine years. Special interests and discussions focus on Jain response to vegetarianism, non violence, and resolution of issues like terrorism,

abortion, business and bio ethics, sexually transmitted diseases, euthanasia etc.

ii. Bharatiya Jain Sangathan, Pune

A non-profit, non-political, Non Governmental Organization (NGO) working towards Social Enlightenment, BJS has been in the forefront of doing exemplary work in the field of Social Service, Disaster Management and Education. Founded as Akhil Maharashtra Jain Sanghatana by Shri Shantilal Muttha in 1985, it got its present name Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana (BJS) in 1993 in the wake of the Latur earthquake and was registered as BJS on 18th October 1993.

After the Latur earthquake BJS got involved in Disaster Management for the first time. While executing the project Mutthaji realized that the orphans if left to themselves would become vagabonds and subsequently a liability to society. He therefore decided to move 1,200 orphan boys to Pune and take the entire responsibility of educating them. This is how the organization entered into the field of Disaster Management and Education. BJS is professionally managed and has established a well-knit nationwide network of volunteers from the Jain community willing to devote their time for the welfare of society. BJS extensively developed in the States of Maharashtra & Chattisgarh and has state-level organizations in the states of Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. All projects are taken up only after a thorough research and are conceptualized and designed by professionals. *www.bjsindia.org*

iii. Shri Mahāvīrjī, Rajasthan

Situated in district Karauli, this luminary pilgrim place with a host of Jain temples and the luminary idol of Mahāvīra, pilgrim rest houses is fast becoming the largest Jain center in north India. The society called Digambar Jain Atiśaya Kṣetra Shri Mah*āvīrjī* runs a number of other social institutions like Jain Vidya Sansthan (education and research centre for Jain studies), naturopathy hospital, ayurvedic dispensary and an allopathic hospital providing free health services to local residents. They have also adopted districts Savai Madhopur and Karauli to provide artificial limbs and rehabilitation support to needy people. There are full fledges schools for girls (Adarsh Mahila Vidylaya) and support to destitute

and meritorious students. On the cultural front, they hold annual fair for all communities along with regular celebrations for holy days for Jains. Contact persons: Naresh K. Sethi Chairman, Digambar Jain Bhattarakaji ki Nasia, Savai Ram Singh Road Jaipur.

iv. Mahavira Vikalanga, Jaipur

Run by Mahāvīra Vikalanga Samiti Jaipur, this is a complete organization to design, build and fit artificial legs (specifically prepared for each amputee). These legs provide almost complete mobility to the recipients at almost no cost. Besides they also provide means like cycles, sewing machines and other accessories to make some severely handicapped cases to enable them earn their livelihood. To date more than 1 million amputees have benefited by the program. They are now establishing their operations globally with notable achievements in Pakistan, Afghanistan). They are now establishing joint research in artificial limbs with Stanford University, USA as well as extending their support in other areas such as hearing aids etc. Today they are the largest such organization in the world. Contact person: Padma Vibhushan D.R. Mehta Mahāvīra Vikalanga Samiti, Malviya Nagar, Jaipur.

V. Shravanbelgola, Karnataka

Situated 140 Km from Bangalore, this holy temple town with oldest and largest number Jain arts and artifacts, tallest single stone rock cut idol in the world is known for its religious and now social activities. The Mahamastakbhisheka of Monolith idol of Bāhubali held every twelve years has become an international festival and celebration of Jain rituals and philosophy of renunciation. The overall development of this town by SJDMI with Svami Charu Kirti Bhattarak as its chairman has seen development of a host of educational institutions from pre primary to school, professional colleges nursing, engineering etc, research institutes and now a university in and around Shravanbelgola. There is a community kitchen run by the institute which provides free food to all visiting the place. Besides SJDMI also provides support to other religious cum education institutions in Karnataka.

8.0 Conclusions

Uniqueness of Jains is to understand and develop firm belief in the sermons of Jinas, and then use them for taking preventive measures (both abstinence and cautious indulgence) in making their

present lives free from economic, health and social problems. Simultaneously they use their resources to serve the community they live and share their wealth (time, knowledge and money) to help others be better educated and live a happier-healthier and prosperous life. Important principle underlying Jain psyche is the equating of our bad habits (laziness, not working hard, accumulation of wealth etc) and wrong/immoral activities (e.g. stealing, killing or torturing others, telling lies and adultery in our relationships or causing hurt through sexual actions to others) as sins (papa); encouraging Jains not to indulge in them. If one has to indulge then review and accept that as a mistake and take corrective action (pratikramaṇa), minimize indulgence and with caution.

Further, most of the efforts on social front and elsewhere are individual initiatives, backed by others from the community as and when needed and proved successful. Involvement of the state in such efforts is kept to the minimal unless required by the law of the land.

REFERENCES

1. *Rahe bhāvanā esī merī sarala satya vyavahāra karū?*
   Bane jahā taka esa jīvana me? auro kā upakāra karū?//
   Maitrī bhāva jagata me? merā saba jīvo se nitya rahe
   Dīna dukhī jīvo para mere ura se Karūṇā stotra bahe//
   The above tour lines have been extracted from stanzas 4 and 5 of *Meri Bhāvanā* by Pt. Jugal Kishore Mukhtar.
2. The three attributes of *Āpta* (Jina) are free from all kinds of flaws (dośa), omniscient (sarvajÚa) and delivering sermons of universal beneficence (Hitopadeśa). *Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra by* Samant abhadra verse 5-8.
3. *Tattvārtha-sūtra* by Umāsvāti: sūtra 1; *Samyak darśana-jñāna-cāritrāi mokṣamārga?*
4. Called *āvaśaykas* which are: *sāmāyika; caturvi?śatistva; vandanā; pratikramaṇa* and *kāyotsarga*
5. *Upagūhana, Sthithikaraṇa, Vātsalya and Prabhāvanā* respectively.
6. Methods used by Mahāvīra for Social change by Prof. K.C.Sogani (see chapter 2)
7. First limb of 12 limbs of Jain Canons
8. Seventh limb of Jain Canons
9. *Tattvārtha-sūtra* by Umāsvāti V.21*Parasparopagraho jīvānāma*
10. *Ratnakaraṇḍa-śrāvakācāra,* verse-58,59

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15
Reflections of A Jain Woman

Sheel Parekh

Abstract

It is not at all unusual to find women strong in spirit both in Jain literature and in life. However, women are still treated as subordinate to men, and are hardly visible in public life. The philosophy itself suggests that all souls are equal: how, then, has it come about that in practice that differential values are attributed to women and men, and the former are expected to match up to demanding ideals? In this paper, I reflect upon these issues.

Introduction

According to Jain theology, the sentient soul is to be found shifting form through four possible states of being called *gati* – heavenly, human, beings in the *tiryañca* state, (animals, plants, insects, etc., including beings thought to have bodies made of air, or water, or fire, or earth), and hellish. There are two other states of the soul – the *nigoda* and the *siddha* – which are the two ends of the spectrum of life, the former being its point of origin and the latter its end, a constant, unchanging, eternal state of bliss. The nature of the soul, as per Jain belief, is to move upwards: a teleological principle that begins with the soul first taking an evolutionary step forward from the state of *nigoda* or microscopic living beings (which live in clusters and go through multiple lifetimes within the span of a human breath) through different forms of life, to end with liberation from the transmigratory cycle, the achievement of the state of *siddha*. The individual soul is responsible for its own liberation – and one's own *karma* (visualized as subtle matter that attaches itself to the soul) is causal in that it determines what physical form the soul might take when it leaves its current body.

All souls are equal, according to the principle of *samatva*;

soteriological agency, however, is not granted to all beings – rather, while every soul in each of the four *gatis* is seen as having its own innate capacities to work towards liberation, *moksa* may be achieved *only through a human body*[1] . In fact, the Digambaras go further and make a finer distinction, stating emphatically that women cannot attain *mokṣa*, while the Śvetāmbaras believe that they do. On the one hand is *samatva*, the principle of equality, and on the other, hierarchies are put into place.

The Great Gender Debate

Padmanabh Jaini's research into the Jain debates on liberation for women[2] stands testimony to the fact that women were thought to be inferior to men within the Jain faith even as early as the second century AD. Jaini traces the debate back to the Umāsvāti's *Tattvārthastra* in which, in a *stra* describing the *siddha*[3] , the word *li?ga* (a word that is used to connote both gender and psychological sexual inclination) is used in conjunction with not only men (puliṅga), but also women (strīliṅga) and hermaphrodites (napuṅṣakliṇga). The interpretation given to it by the Digambaras is that Umāsvāti referred not to physical (biological) gender but to the sexuality of human beings (which the Jains assert as being of three broad types, and which is recognized as independent of biological gender), while the Śvetāmbaras make the case that Umāsvāti or Umāsvāmi as they call him, was in fact referring to physical gender: and this is the basis of the whole argument against *strīmokṣa*. The Śvetāmbara argument is that women can achieve *mokṣa* on account of their ability to practice the *ratnatraya* of right view, right knowledge and right conduct, to which the Digambaras argue that:

"Ācwomen cannot attain *mokṣa* because they are inherently inferior to men... [because of] (1) the inability of women to be reborn in the seventh and lowest hell, unlike men; (2) their inability to renounce all possessions, including clothes; (3) their inferiority in such skills as debating; (4) their inferior position in both general society and the ecclesiastical order."[4]

In fact, Ācārya Kundakunda even says:

The genital organs of the woman, her nav[e]l, armpits and the area between her breasts, are said [in the scriptures] to be breeding grounds for subtle forms of life. How can there be [full] renunciation for a woman?

Their minds are not pure and by nature they are not firm in mind or in body. They have monthly menstruation. Therefore, for women there is no meditation free from fear.[5]

Thus it is impossible for women to effect the complete exhaustion of *karmas*, even though they might be pure of faith and well-read in the scriptures, and may even be practitioners of a severe code of conduct. Kundakunda also says that the nature of women is full of negligence, and they are prone to infatuation, aversion, fear and disgust, and are cunning, inconstant and fickle. Therefore they cannot attain liberation.

Śvetāmbara monks, even while they refute the argument against *mokṣa* for women, are not above misogyny themselves: they too have a patronizing and sexist attitude towards women, and at one level seem to accept the possibility of *strīmokṣa* because their own capacity to attain *mokṣa* is also implicated, for like the women, they too wore clothes. They accept that women are fickle-minded, but reject the argument that this can be made a basis to deny women the ability to attain *mokṣa*. They point out that the 19th Tīrtha?kara was a woman, Mallikumārī, who the Digambaras believe was a man. The Śvetāmbaras place Mallikumārī within a hagiography that traces her story back to a past life in which Malli was Mahābala, a king, whose deceit garnered for him the *karma* of being born a woman although his other deeds had effectively enabled him to accumulate the *Tīrtha?kara-nāma-karma*. Thus they overlay the story of a woman with that of a man, and subsume the former within the latter. And in their temples, Malli is represented as having the same form as the other Tīrtha?karas. Jaini records how Bhāvasena, a 14th century Digambara monk, in fact uses the argument that in Jain art, Malli is represented as male, so the Tīrtha?kara must have been a male[6]. The argument is inconclusive, though, and each sect continues to believe its own version of the Agtruth".

Setting the Tongue Free

The point that I am trying to make here is that while the misogynist attitude of monks from both sects have been transmitted down to the present across the centuries, nowhere does one hear the voice of the Jain women. Women have kept away from, or been kept out of, the whole debate – silenced, not even spectators. One could offer many arguments against the Digambara view: let me take first the argument that women cannot be reborn in the seventh

hell, unlike men. The seventh hell is a state of being in which utmost cruelty is meted out to others, and it is believed that women cannot be born into it because of their incapacity to be as cruel as men. This, however, cannot be a ground for saying that women cannot reach the *siddhaloka*, right at the top of the cosmos – given that the one essential quality of the *siddhas* is *vātsalya*, women would perhaps find it easier to do so as they have a great deal more compassion (vātsalya) than men! In all probability, they are more capable of reaching the state of the *siddha* quicker than their male counterparts. Secondly, to renounce all possessions including clothes is as possible for a woman as much as for a man – Lal Ded, for instance, wandered around naked – but woman's nudity is not socially acceptable, as the woman's body is both a source of sensual pleasure for men and a source of guilt for them, for it is a reminder of man's own responsibility as regards his libido. Much easier to avoid it and blame it on the woman instead, and shame her. This is clearly visible even today, when women are blamed for being 'provocative' just for being who they are, and expressing themselves in unequivocal terms. Simply put, women are forced into taking cognizance of the male gaze, and turn their own gaze too upon themselves rather than set their sights on the goal of becoming a *siddha*. Thirdly, women's skills in communication and by extension in debating must have been great – for the Jain canonical texts and commentaries in which the story of ?iṣabdeva's sons Bharata and Bahubali are found tell us that Ṛiṣabdeva himself taught not his sons but his daughters Brāhmī and Sundarī the skills of writing and mathematics, which they spread into the world. If he, the first Tīrtha?kara, had such faith in his daughters but not in his sons, then it follows that their skill at least in this area was greater than that of his sons. Lastly, if women occupy an inferior position, this is the imposition of the patriarchy: the patronizing attitude of superiority does not allow women to express themselves fully in any arena where they might perform better than men, except within the domestic sphere, and they are not granted any space in public forums – often, they may not even be allowed to present in public assemblies, let alone speak – and thus their so-called secondary position in both general society and the ecclesiastical order[7] . This would change if only men were sensitive and open enough to accept women as equals. This simple truth is buried under layers of misconceptions.

Kundakunda's arguments regarding the bodies of women actually apply to both men and women, as the human body is host to various microscopic organisms. Not only this, it is now proven that while women produce just one or two eggs per monthly period, the number of living sperm that men produce are far, far more in number. How then can they be more capable of *mokṣa* than women? In fact, the contrary is more likely. The stories of the mothers of the Tīrthaṅkaras do in fact show women to be the founts of *vātsalya*, or compassion – a quality that is a prerequisite to become a Tīrtha?kara. Their purity, their firmness of mind, their ability to act in conjunction with right views (as per the Jaina canon) is clearly visible in the stories of the *mahāsatīs* – be it a Candanā or an Anjanā, or a Rājīmatī, Maināsundarī or Draupadi, or any of the others, each is clear of purpose and firm of faith. How, then, can one say that *mokṣa* is denied to them?[8]

Of Ideal and Real Women

One might go on to ask, if human birth is needed for the achievement of liberation, where from would the human body arise, if the womb of a woman were not there to produce the egg cell and nourish the growing embryo? That possibility is an important factor that feeds into the male view of woman as a nourishing mother, for it is in this capacity that he first sees a woman. This perhaps explains the reverence with which the mothers of the Tīrtha?karas are honoured. The mother's devotion and commitment are linked to the well-being of her family and a whole set of rituals developed around it, making her the central figure within the domestic setting, and crucially, curtailing her interaction in the public sphere. The other women who are revered in the Jain tradition are the *mahāsatīs*, and the *yakṣis* or goddesses that stand for certain qualities, representing at the human and the superhuman levels the power of the woman to give of and even sacrifice herself for the larger good of the home, community and religion. These stories in fact work to arrogate and re-modulate women's stories too to bolster the patriarchy: from women it is not independence or insurrection but conformity and capitulation that are ultimately required.

What seems clear here is a denial of the capacities and capabilities of woman, arising from a deep-rooted fear and mistrust of women. At the physical level, all the woman needs of the man is his sperm: she is an independent being in everything else, and both

adept and flexible. Also, when with child, the woman enters a world of her own that the man can never attain or expect to understand: her body during this time is hers, yet houses another too; something within her that is separate from her, yet of her at the same timẽ. The woman grows, and visibly. She produces a new being from her own body, nurtures it, independent of the male of the species. The (pro) creative woman is in fact not granted recognition for who she is, but for what she can do. The *Śvetāmbara* canon says that the first liberated being in this cycle of time was Marudevī, the mother of Ṛiṣabdeva. However, she is not worshipped even by the *Śvetāmbaras*, but her grandson Bāhubali, who was the first man to achieve liberation, is held up as a larger than life symbol of the possibility of liberation for a layman – no thought is spared for the laywoman! The brothers Bharat and Bāhubalī who fought each other over a kingdom are remembered, while the sisters Brāhmī and Sundarī who spread knowledge and wisdom in the world are mostly forgotten. Similarly, the Tīrtha?kara Mallikumārī is posited not as an ideal for women to follow, but enveloped in hagiography that brings up the story of Mahābala every time her name comes up, and her womanhood is wiped out as she becomes Mallināṭha. In fact, throughout Jain narratives, one finds that stories of Jain women are for the most part heard only through and in relation to the stories of men, embedded within them. We find Rājīmatī's story embedded in the story of the Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha: the monk Rathanemi's arousal at the sight of the nun Rājīmatī's naked body is made out to be her responsibility, and she is blamed for his passion, the *nimitta* or the express cause, the impediment to his spiritual quest, as if he had no role to play. Thus stand revealed, first, an anxiety and fear of the female in the male from which arise the need to control, confine and regulate women; and second (which follows from the first), the placing of a great value on chastity, especially in the context of the female – resulting in a system of both external and internal controls, the latter far more severe in Jainism than in any other organized religion. Thus women have to deal with double standards, and grapple with questionable male ethics and morality.

The Modern Jain Woman

The sex ratio among Jains in India, as per the census of 2001, is 870 per 1000 males – female feticide is known among the Jains –

and although 90% of Jain women are educated, only 9% are active contributors to the work force[9] . This bears out the argument that women are regulated, and kept out of public spaces. So where does that leave the Jain woman of today? Ethnographic researches and religious studies such as N. Shanta's, or Whitney Kelting's, and more recently Manisha Sethi's[10] establish that the condition of the Jain woman is even more constricted than women in other religions and cultures: not only is she seen as the home-maker and the child-bearer, and the bearer of tradition within a patriarchal culture which she herself is constrained to contribute to and to propagate – but at the same time she also has extremely high ideals of faith to conform to. Women thus find that great demands are placed on their capabilities, and in twisting themselves to fit into each of these roles, begin to live 'heroic' lives (I use Kelting's vocabulary here) as a matter of course. A woman may of course opt out of a life of domesticity and choose to become a nun, despite its daunting ascetic codes – despite this, Jain nuns outnumber the monks by a little over 3:1. Nuns still have to remain subservient to their male peers, though, and must necessarily acknowledge their inferiority to the monks through the *vandana vyavahāra*, the act of bowing down to the male monks, which is practiced by even the most senior of nuns in the presence of even the most junior of monks. It is only to be hoped that women begin to see how dramatically different the rules that apply to men and women are, and perhaps begin to review their position *vis a vis* men – does *samatva* really imply equality with men, or does it imply, for women, an equanimity in the face of a discordant reality?

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1. In fact, not all souls are absolutely equal. The belief is that some souls will never move out of the *nigoda* state, and thus have no chance of ever becoming a *siddha*. Padmanabh S. Jaini elaborates upon this point in his article "*Karma* and the problem of Rebirth in Jainism" in his collection of essays titled *Collected Papers on Jaina Studies*.
2. Padmanabh S. Jaini's *Gender and Salvation: Jaina Debates on the Spiritual Liberation of Women* offers a selection of texts across the centuries.
3. *Tattvārthasūtra* X.4
4. *Gender and Salvation*, p.170
5. *Ibid*, p. 166

6. Jaini's essay "*Muktivicāra* of Bhāvasena: Text and Translation", in *Collected Papers on Jaina Studies*.
7. In this connection, I would like to draw the reader's attention to certain incidents in the last few decades. *Samaṇa Suttam*, a "unanimous work" brought out by the Jain community in 1975, encapsulating "the essence of the Jaina religion". The book had been approved, says the Publisher's Note, at an assembly "on 29-30 November in1974, in Delhi, [which] was attended by the Jaina *Ācāryas* and monks, scholars and laymen, representing all the Jaina sects." This question for me here is: where were the nuns and the laywomen? If current practices are any indication, there were none present at all at this meet.
Manisha Sethi records an incident at a *Śāramaṇa Saṅgha* gathering at Pune in 1987, where a Jain nun Dr. Manju Sri convened a meeting of nuns in which "a resolution against the current mode of *vandana vyavahāra* was placed. After a lengthy debate, 74 of the 77 *sādhvīs* voted with the proposal. However, since it was time for *gocarī* [the routine of going around the community to collect food], the sadhvis did not formally sign their assent to a written document. But upon their return to their gurus, the *sādhvīs* received a strong reprimand from the minis who accused them of refusing to respect the 'elders' — the monks."
I would like to also relate my own experience: about three years ago, I attended the inaugural meet of Jain International Trade Organisation, Hyderabad Chapter – an organisation specifically for Jains who were in business or trade. I wondered, as a publisher, if I could also become a part of it, and so I went to the meet... only to find that *I was one of just two women at the event, and at which the other, a young chartered accountant in training (also a Marwari Jain), had been called in to be a compere!!* My amazement turned to disbelief as I was told that women could not be a part of this organisation, and that they should join JIWO, Jain International Women's Organisation instead. Clearly, even in business and trade, women were not on an equal footing with men. Rather, in calling in a young woman to host the event, the community was using her as a mere tool.
8. The 16 *mahāsatīs* are: Brāhmī, Sundarī, Candanā (also known as Candanabālā), Rājīmatī, Draupadī, Kauśalyā, Mṛgāvatī, Sulasā, Sītā, Damyantī, Śivādevī, Kuntī, Subhadrā, Celanā, Prabhāvatī and Padmāvatī. In the Jain canon, their stories are held up as ideals of feminine chastity and devoutness among the Jains. Several of these, especially the stories of Candanabālā and Rājīmatī, are also

depicted in dramatic or dance performances during Jain festivals or *chāturmāsa,* the four-month period from the onset of the monsoon to its close. Some of these stories and the impression they make on the lives of contemporary women are discussed in detail by M. Whitney Kelting's *Heroic Wives: Rituals, Stories and the Virtues of Jain Wifehood.*

9. Figures cited by sociologist P C Jain during the course of a lecture titled "Sociology of the Jains" delivered under the aegis of the 8th International Summer School of Jaina Studies at Mangalayatan University on 14 June 2012. (See also Prakash C. Jain, Jains in India and Abroad, 2011)
10. See N. Shanta's *The Unknown Pilgrims: History, Life and Spirituality of the Jaina Women;* M. Whitney Kelting's *Heroic Wives: Rituals, Stories and the Virtues of Jain Wifehood;* and Manisha Sethi's *Escaping the World: Women Renouncers Among Jains.* New Delhi: Routledge, 2012.

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16

Uttam Kshama (Supreme Forgiveness): A Jain Concept and Practice for Spiritual Progress, Social Harmony and Peace

Viney Jain

In social interactions, occurrences of conflict, interpersonal offences and hurt happen frequently. Most persons generally react to such events with toxic emotions of anger and avoidance or revenge giving rise to cycles of violence and counter violence, resulting in injuries, mental anguish and ill health, both in the perceived offenders and victims. To avoid these painful situations, Jainism and most other religions have prescribed and encouraged forgiveness for thousands of years as a more desirable positive and sublime response to hurt and offence during conflicts (McCullough and Worthington, 1999; Petersen, 2009).

The theistic religions, including the Abrahamic traditions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) and some sections of the Hindu traditions (Sanatam Dharma), for example, associate and attribute forgiveness directly to GOD. To quote the famous English poet Alexander Pope "to err is human, to forgive is divine".

In contrast, the non-theistic religions, Jainism and Buddhism, derive forgiveness from the nature of the soul (*jiva/atman*) and virtue of compassion (loving kindness or *metta*) respectively. Thus, the religious roots, the meaning of the concept of forgiveness, its underlying basis, the emphasis and its practice differ significantly in various religious traditions.

During the last few decades, the importance of the ancient religious concept of forgiveness has also been recognized in modern scientific circles (Worthington, 2005). Interestingly, after the terrorist

attacks on 09/11/2001 on the world trade centre in New York, theoretical and empirical studies on forgiveness and its applications, by psychologists, sociologists and biomedical scientists, have grown almost exponentially. From the view-point of modern psychology, forgiveness can be conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that is formed by interplay between cognition, emotion and behavior. It is considered as a complex act of consciousness that liberates the psych from the harmful emotion of anger, the need for personal vengeance and the perception of the self as a victim.

Recent empirical researches indicate that individuals may differ greatly in their capacities to forgive. To forgive or to ask for forgiveness appears to be a complex psycho-social process that depends upon personality factors involving cognitive, emotional and spiritual aspects. Disposition to forgive, considered a personality trait, is subject to modulation by a number of internal and external variables. Religiosity and spirituality are among the important factors, which directly correlate with the disposition to forgive (McCullough. 2001; Piedmont and Leach, 2002).

Concept of Forgiveness in Jain Philosophy

Jainism, the most ancient of world religions, assigned unique meaning to the concept of forgiveness and attached great importance to it for the practice of *Ahinsa*, the supreme pathway for spiritual progress of the individual, social harmony and peace essential for the all-round sustainable development.

According to Jain metaphysics, a worldly living-being is a blend of two independent substances: (1) Soul (*Jiva/Atma*), a formless unobservable entity, functioning as consciousness (*chetna*) and (2) Matter (*Pudgala*), the observable physical substrate constituting the various body-forms that enable consciousness to be manifested. The gross physical bodies survive for limited life-spans, after death the soul adopts a new body-form (rebirth).Forgiveness is considered to be one of the inherent natural attributes of the soul (*Jiva/Atma*). We shall discuss this concept of forgiveness and its practice in relation to the wellness and spiritual evolution of the individual living-being and the beneficial impact this brings to the shared social environment both from the transcendental (*nishchayanaya*) and the pragmatic (*vayavaharnaya*) points of view.

Forgiveness Correlates with the Purity of the Soul (Self)

From the transcendental self-referential point of view, every

soul in its pure passionless state of equanimity, spontaneously expresses supreme forgiveness (*UttamKshama*) that is unconditional and universal. However, the soul-states of mundane worldly living-beings (*sansarikjiva*) are impure and contaminated with passions because of bondage with karmas. According to Jain philosophy, the karmas are special types of very subtle material particles, (we may call them *karmons*), which are attracted and get attached to the soul as a consequence of acts, feelings and thoughts of passions. Bondage with karmas, constituting the subtle karmic-body, hinders the full expression of the spiritual attributes. Levels of expression of forgiveness depend, therefore, inversely on the karmic bondage and relate directly to the stages and degrees of spiritual purity. Spiritual practices aiming to purify the soul (self-purification) should, therefore, enhance the level of expression of forgiveness.

The Pathway and Processes of Self-Purification

Realization of the true nature of the Self is the only real pathway for the evolution of *UttamKshama*. Rational vision (*samyakdarshan*) and rational knowledge (*samyakgyan*) provide the essential basis for right conduct (*samyakcharitra*) necessary for self-purification and attaining the passionless state of perfect equanimity (*veetraagata*).

Self-efforts (*pursharth*) to realize the true nature of the self can initiate appropriate alterations in *karma* dynamics tofacilitatethe processes of self-purification and enhance the disposition to forgive.

Karma-dynamics isdetermined by the influx (*ashrav*) of *karmons*, their bondage (*bandh*) with the soul and dissolution (*nirjara*) as shown schematically in Fig.16.1.

The influx and bondage are caused by the mental, vocal and physical activities of the living-being and the strength of bondage depends on the intensities of the associated passions (such as anger, pride, deceit, greed).

The type of bondage is determined by the nature and number of *karmons*, as well as the strength and duration of the bonds. Self-purification progresses through the reduction of the *karmic-body*. The influx of *karmons* can be inhibited (*samavara*) by efforts to practice self-restraint (*sanyam*) to check the stream of toxic emotions (*kashaya*) of anger, pride, deceit and greed. The dissolution of the *karmic-bondage* occurs as a natural process of shedding after activation and completion of the bond duration. Spiritual practices

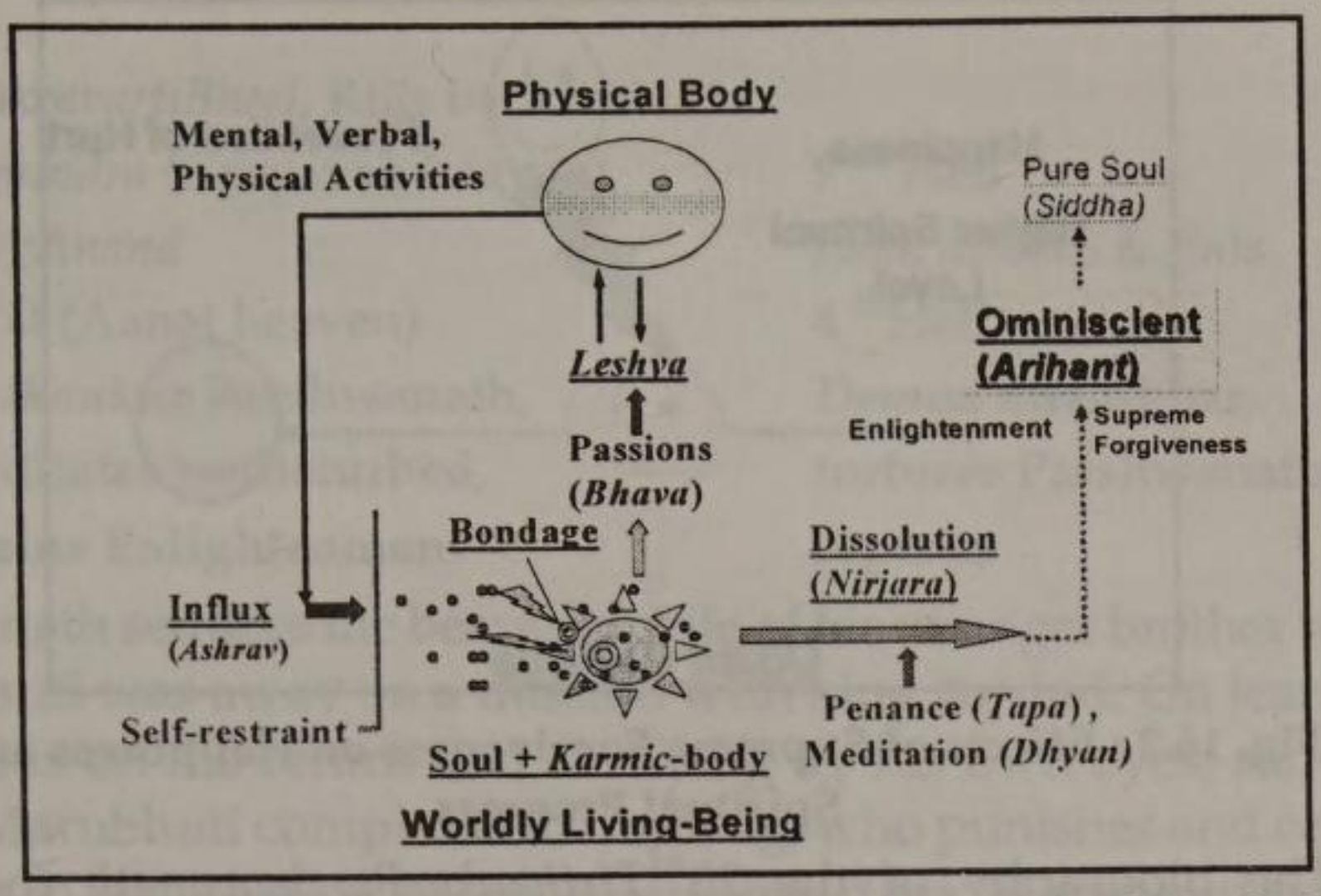

Figure 16.1: Karma-Dynamics, Spiritual Purification and Evolution of Supreme Forgiveness

like introspection-repentance for non-observance of ethical practices (*pratikraman*), penance (*tapa*) and meditation (*dhyana*) to realize the true nature of the self (soul), can significantly accelerate the processes of dissolution of karmas. With the elimination of all the destructive (*ghatiya*) *Karmons* from the soul, the worldly soul becomes purified, attains the passionless, equanimous, enlightened, blissful omniscient state (*Arihant*) that is endowed with the spontaneous expression of universal and unconditional forgiveness. Finally, after complete dissolution of the *karmic*-and the gross physical-body, the soul (*jiva*) becomes free of its bondage from matter and gets liberated from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth (*Siddha*).

Supreme forgiveness is an inherent attribute of the basic benevolent nature of the soul and does not depend in anyway on the extrinsic circumstances such as expression of an apology and repentance from the offender or retributive punishment meted out to him. Thus, *Uttam Kshama* is expressed spontaneously, unconditionally and universally.

A person having a psychic disposition for supreme forgiveness does not feel hurt by any offence, is not angry, has no desire for revenge and attains a higher Spiritual State enhancing peace and happiness (Fig.16.2).

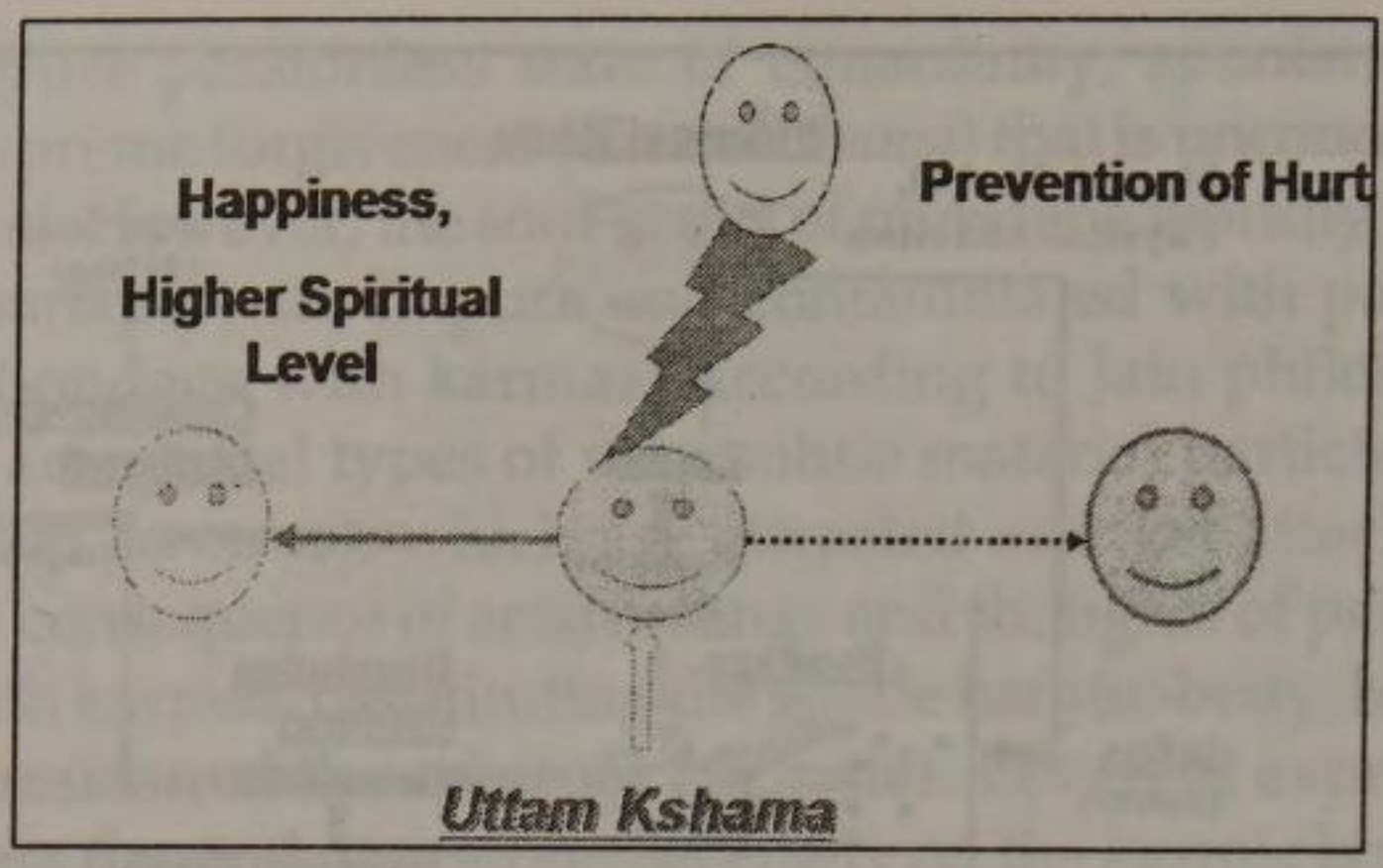

Fig. 16.2 : Effects of Supreme Forgiveness on Happiness and Spiritual Progress

The biography of the 23rd *TirthankarParshawanath* (born in Varanasi, in 877 BCE) and the legends associated with his ten previous lives narrated in Jain Purans (see for example: *Adipuran* by Acharya Jinsen; *Pasanah-cariuby* Budha Sridhar) illustrate the significance of developing the disposition of instant, unconditional, universal and absolute forgiveness (*UttamKshama* or Supreme Forgiveness) for spiritual progress. In contrast, a person with disposition that is deficient in the trait of forgiveness suffers the consequences of anger, vengeance and violence as demonstrated by the behaviour and fate of Kamath.

The legends recount stories of ten past lives (Table 1) starting from the Parshwa's tenth previous life when he was named Marubhuti, the son of a royal priest in the court of king Arvind, the ruler of Podanpur in Bharat kshetra of Jambudwipa. Marubhuti was simple, humble and forgiving but his elder brother Kamath was a bad character, jealous, full of deceit and revenge. His father being a religious and pious person renounced the worldly life to become an ascetic. King Arvind appointed Marubhuti in his father's place ignoring the elder brother Kamath.

Table 16.1: Summary of Successive Lives of Marubhuti and Kamath

***Marubhuti*, offended, angry**	***Kamath*, humiliated, revengeful, requests forgiveness kills Marubhuti**
• ***Elephant*, leads life of restraint**	***Snake*, Bites & kills**
• *Deva* (Sahstrar heaven)	5 th Hell
• *Vidyadhar king Python*, Swallows	
• *Deva* (Achyut heaven)	6 th Hell

• *ChakravartiBheel*, Kills by Arrow	
• *Ahmindra* (Greyavak heaven)	7 th Hell
• *KingAnand*	*Lion*, attacks & Eats
• *Indra* (Aanat heaven)	4 thHell
• ***Tirthankar* Parshwanath,**	***Demon* Shambhar,**
meditates undisturbed,	**tortures Parshwanath,**
attains Enlightenment	**repents**

Kamath seduces the beautiful wife of his younger brother while Marubhuti was away on a mission with king Arvind. On learning about this on his return and verifying by his own eyes, sad and angry Marubhuti complains to the King, who punishes and orders Kamath to leave his kingdom. After a few days, Marubhuti started missing his brother and was full of remorse considering himself responsible for his brother's misfortune and suffering. Marubhuti sets out in search of Kamath and finds him among a group of mendicants practicing painful exercises and self-torture. Marubhuti asks for forgiveness for causing hurt and requests Kamath to return home. Kamath gets annoyed, picks up a rock and throws it on the head of Marubhuti killing him instantly. King Arvind on hearing the tragic news became detached and renouncing the worldly life decided to lead the life of a monk.

Marubhuti was reborn as an elephant in a forest. Once, Muni Arvind was practicing deep meditation in the same area. The elephant, on seeing the Muni meditating in *kayotsarga* posture with the vision focused on the tip of the nose, became very calm and stood watching him. Muni Arvind opened his eyes and knowing through clairvoyance that the elephant standing before him was the reincarnation of Marubhuti addressed him thus "O Elephant King, remember that you are the reincarnation of Marubhuti, the royal priest of Podanpur. Your elder brother had seduced your wife and murdered you. You are born as an elephant because you had unpleasant and sad feelings at the time of death. Now you should maintain pious intentions and practice self-restraint and good conduct so that you can get rid of your inauspicious karma and get liberated. The elephant remembering his past life, recognized the Muni as King Arvind, his master and decided to follow his advice. After the departure of the Muni, the elephant indeed led a life of restraint, fasting, avoiding hurting anybody and being helpful to its fellow creatures.

One day a fire broke in the forest. To save itself from fire, the elephant took shelter in a mud-pond. Kamath, after his death, was also born as a poisonous serpent in the same forest. On seeing the elephant, the serpent recognized it as the enemy responsible for humiliation in the previous birth. The serpent bit the elephant in revenge, who died peacefully tolerating the pain and was subsequently reborn as *Deva* in heaven. The serpent was reborn in the 5^{th} hell.

The cycle of anger, revenge, hurt and violence from Kamath and tolerance and forgiveness without any malice or violence on the part of Marubhuti continued for a long time during several incarnations (summarized in Table 1). Due to his bad intentions and cruel deeds, Kamath had to suffer untold pain in hell, while Marubhuti, because of his virtuous intentions and auspices *Karma*, enjoyed the pleasures in heaven.

In the last birth Marubhuti was reborn as Parshwanath (son of King and queen of Varanasi). One day Prince Parshwa saw Hermit Mahipala (incarnation of Kamath) performing *Panchagni Tapa*. Surrounded by burning fires all around, unmindful of causing injury to others, he was cutting firewood to add to the fires. Parshwanath, endowed with clairvoyance, asked him to stop and exclaimed..."There dwell in that log a serpent couple, please do not hurt them". The hermit did not believe him, got annoyed and did not stop, thereby cutting the snakes into pieces. Prince Parshwa recited *Namokar Mantra* to the dying Serpent Couple. Parshwanath, who was then 30 years of age, felt very sad watching and reflecting on the sufferings of innocent beings, decided to renounce the world and adopted life of an ascetic.

The serpents were reborn in heaven as Deva Dharnendra and Devi Padmavati. Humiliated, the hermit dies and was born as a Demon God named Shambhar. While Parshawa was meditating on the nature of pure soul, Shambhar, remembering the events of past life, started to torture him to take revenge. Dharnendra & Padmavati, who were grateful to Parshawa, descended from heaven to offer protection against *Upsarg* by the Demon Shambhar (Kamath). Parshwanath, undisturbed by the torture, continued meditation and contemplation of the Pure-Self, thereby attaining enlightenment and Ominiscience (*KevalJnana*).Eventually, Kamath in the incarnation of demon Shambhar realized his mistakes, repented and asked for forgiveness.

This legend, associated with *Tirthankar Parshwanath*, beautifully illustrates the crucial beneficial role of forgiveness in spiritual uplift, mental peace, enlightenment and bliss. Un-forgiveness and revenge, in contrast, lead to spiritual decline and continued suffering (experienced by Kamath during subsequent rebirths).

Forgiveness for Social Harmony and Peace

The primary focus on forgiveness in Jainism is for the spiritual progress and enlightenment of the individual. However, from the other-referential and practical view-point (*vayvaharnaya*), the practice of forgiveness is instrumental in effectively reducing aggressive behaviour/violence and enhancing good interpersonal relationships and social harmony. In fact, the individual benefit and social good are interwoven, since the worldly living-beings are mutually interdependent for their mundane existence:

"Parasparo-Pagraho Jivanam"

Living-Beings function to help each other—Umaswami in *Tatvarth-sutra*

We need to interact in a cooperative mode with other living-beings and the environment. Competitions and conflicts erode social cohesion. During interpersonal interactions within a family or a social group, hurts/injuries occur frequently by accident (unintentionally) or through planned actions (intentionally). After such happenings, anger and revenge are destructive and harmful giving rise to unending spirals of violence. Seeking and granting unconditional forgiveness, even in the events of grave provocations, by the perceived offenders and victims, on the other hand, are pro-social positive responses, which help in restoring relationships and promote personal as well as social wellness – so essential for peaceful co-existence. Several recent empirical studies carried out at various levels by sociologists and biomedical scientists have provided strong evidence supporting these statements.

The *Kshama-vani Diwas* (Forgiveness Day)

Recognizing the significance of enhancing forgiveness in the worldly life, Jains celebrate *Kshama-vani Diwas* (Forgiveness Day) devoted to introspection, seeking and granting unconditional forgiveness. The forgiveness day is observed every year (August/September) at the conclusion of the great spiritual festival of *"Das Lakshan Dharam Maha Parv"*, also known as *"Paryushan Parv*Āh,

dedicated to self-purification for spiritual evolution. The festival starts on the 5th day of the bright fortnight in the month of *"Bhadrapad"* according to the Hindu calendar and continues for ten days. Each day is focussed, in particular, to the observance of one of the ten inherent attributes/virtues (*dharma*) of the soul. The ten spiritual attributes are:

1. Forgiveness (*Kshmā*)
2. Straightforwardness (*Ārjava*)
3. Humility, Modesty (*Mārdava*)
4. Purity of thought, Contentment (*Śhaucha*)
5. Truth (*Satya*)
6. Self-Restraint (*Saṁyama*)
7. Austerity, Penance (*Tapa*)
8. Renunciation (*Tyāga*)
9. Non-attachment (*Ākin?canya*)
10. Celibacy (*Brahmacarya*)

The first day of the festival is devoted for cultivating and enhancing the expression of "Supreme Forgiveness (*UttamKshama*)" underscoring the great importance of forgiveness disposition in the processes of self-purification and spiritual evolution. Celebration of Forgiveness Day after the conclusion of the ten day festival, getting rid of all toxic emotions of anger, pride, deceit and greed, following the path of truth and self-restraint, is an appropriate occasion to seek and grant forgiveness to all living creatures of the world, who might have been hurt, knowingly or unknowingly, by one's actions, words or thoughts. On this day followers of Jainism traditionally approach their friends, relatives, colleagues, adversaries and enemies with humility to communicate their feelings with the following words:

KhamemiSavveJiva, SavveJivaKhamantuMi
Mitti Me Savvabhuesu, Verammajjhamna Kenai

"I forgive all the living beings of the universe, and may all the living-beings forgive me. I have friendship with everyone any animosity towards none"

The practice of celebrating Forgiveness Day in this manner provides excellent opportunity to renew friendships, eschew feelings of revenge, reduce social tensions and gain mental peace. Furthermore, it is a forward step towards spiritual uplift.

Relevance of Forgiveness in Modern Times

Development of a disposition expressing high degree of forgiveness is very relevant to modern times where anger, hate, violence and terror are increasingly threatening the spiritual, mental and physical health at the personal level and sustainable socio-economic development and peace at the global level.

Practicing true forgiveness in real life is very difficult, however, despite all the teachings and awareness of potential benefits. A recent empirical study, conducted among young students in USA, indicated that most common motivations for forgiving were neither empathic nor altruistic but self-oriented, for example, repair of an important relationship or prevention of harmful stress. Further, the reasons to forgive or not to forgive were also conditioned by the offender's behavior. Rendering apology, expression of remorse or offering compensation by the offender frequently facilitated forgiveness (Younger et al., 2004).

Considering the practical aspects, it may appear that the ideal of practicing unconditional and spontaneous forgiveness as conceived and propagated in Jain traditions would be almost unachievable in practice. In this connection, the important roles of religious-spiritual traditions, cultural background and sincere and committed efforts need to be emphasized. A firm belief in the Jain world-view based on (a) *karma-doctrine* reflecting the operation of the principle of causality in an interconnected universe, (b) *Anekantwaad*, emphasizing the multifaceted view of reality and (c)*Ahinsa* the supreme ethical pathwayleading to the cherished goals of enlightenment and liberation, helps the proponents to a great extent in controlling the toxic emotions of anger and revenge. Jain scriptures also recommend a number of spiritual practices, for example the six essentials (*Shat-Awashyak*) followed by devout Jains even today, to develop a rational attitude (*samayakdarshan*) to understand the multifaceted aspects of realty, to cultivate objectivity and equanimity (*veetragata*), enhancing thereby the process of self-purification and the capacity to forgive. Constant endeavours to observe these principles and practices will ultimately enable individuals to achieve the desired objectives to a great extent. The full development and expression of supreme forgiveness evolves and emerges with spiritual progress uplifting consciousness to higher planes - this may sometimes take a long time, even extending

over several lives, as illustrated by the biography of *Tirthankar* Parshwanath.

It is also interesting to note that according to the evolutionary biologists, forgiveness is a basic trait common to many animal species. This is in agreement with the Jain view that forgiveness is an inherent benevolent natural trait of all living-beings and can be developed to a higher degree in spiritually advanced humans, who have higher levels of consciousness. The capacity to forgive is a complex biological adaptation extending throughout the animal kingdom (Wilson, 2002), which evolved as a regulatory mechanism to restore interpersonal relationships and mutual cooperation that provide survival advantage. The gene-based kin selection theories also suggest that individuals with benevolent attitudes sacrificing their self-interests for their group or for their relatives will be favoured by natural selection. Inability to forgive has been shown to induce chronic stress and disease, whereas forgiveness enhances health by reducing psycho-social stress and fatigue, lowering blood pressure and lower-back pain, reducing anxiety, depression and psychopathology and promoting immune responses (Worthington et al., 2007).

Conclusions

In view of the above discussion, it is suggested that the Jain concept of *Uttam Kshama* as a natural attribute of the Self, practices of self-purification and traditions of celebrating the Forgiveness Day, for seeking forgiveness and granting unconditional forgiveness to all, are of great value to the individual and also to the society, hence deserve to be made popular among people at large, irrespective of caste, race, gender, age and faith.

Furthermore, comprehensive interdisciplinary theoretical and experimental research studies to evaluate inhibition of anger by self-control and enhancement of forbearance and the disposition to forgive by Jain spiritual practices such as introspection (*pratikraman*), contemplation (*anupreksha*) and virtuous meditation (*Dharam Dhyan*) are warranted. Imparting training in self-control especially to children at an early age is likely to be an effective strategy that needs to be explored.

Hopefully, practising and enhancing forgiveness would contribute significantly in realizing the vision of a non-violent

world, without wars and weapons, where all living-beings will co-exist in harmony.

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17

Jains' Contribution to Indian Culture and Society

Prakash C. Jain

The Jains are an ancient community of India with their own distinctive religion and philosophy, worship and rituals, social customs and cultural traditions. The Jain identity is crystallized around Jainism which also provides the Jains with a world-view and a way of life that embodies self-reliance, social equality, inter-group tolerance, non-violence, and limiting one's desires and needs. Whatever might have been the numerical strength of the followers of Jainism in the past, presently they add up to less than five million people, which also includes the diasporic Jain population estimated at about 300,000 (Jain 2010; 2011a; 2011b).

The Jains have been a wealthy, though economically stratified community. The overall perception of the Jains as a wealthy community can be attributed to the fact that they have traditionally been engaged mainly in trade, commerce, and banking. Since the 18th century a number of Jains have also been engaged in industrial production in a big way. " Not surprisingly, the Jains have varyingly been described by scholars as "the Jews of India", "the middlemen minority", "the marginal trading community", "the capitalist without capitalism", etc. (See Bonacich 1972; Hardiman 1996; Laidlaw 1995: 104; Nevaskar 1971).

The business and trading character of the Jain community has been continuing even today. Thus according to the 2001 Census, only 18.3% of the Jain population was engaged in "working class" jobs (11.7% cultivators, 3.3% agricultural labourers, 3.3% household industry workers); the rest, that is, 81.7% were in "other" occupations. These other occupations comprise various trade and commercial activities and the modern education-based professions

such as teaching, engineering, medicine, law, accountancy, management, information technology, etc. (See Jain 2011b).

Throughout their long history Jains have made tremendous contribution to the Indian culture and society which is quite disproportionate to the size of the community. Undoubtedly, the most lasting contribution of the Jains has been to Indian Philosophy. The Jain philosophy is an original, independent, distinct and complete thought system with its own brand of metaphysics, ontology, epistemology, logic and ethics (See Radhakrishanan and Moore 1957; Jaini 1979). According to Jain philosophy, the world is real; it is neither an illusion (*maya*) nor untrue or unreal (*mithya*). So is the spirit, or soul. Jainism is also unique in devising an elaborate theory of Karma that explains the interactive nature of soul and matter.

Besides the doctrine of Karma, the other original contribution of the Jain philosophy is the twin-doctrines of *Anekantvad* and *Syadvad*, that is, the doctrines of many-sided view-points, and their comprehension and expression. Apart from helping one to comprehend the complete reality, they also promote intellectual tolerance which is very much needed today in order to avoid religious and ideological fundamentalism.

Jainism has been a living religion for at least 3,000 years now. Its ethical codes of conduct that center around *Anuvratas*, and especially *Ahimsa* and *Aparigraha* are of universal value. Jainism is unique in extending the concern of "Live and Let Live" to all the creatures including microbes and even plants (See Chapple 2002; Singhvi 1990). Jainism had historically exerted a great influence on Shrishaiva, Vaisnava, Lingayata and other Saint-sects in medieval times in terms of the spread of vegetarianism and teetotalism.

Perhaps the most original items in the Jain ethical codes of conduct are *Sallekhana* (the art of dying) and *Kshama* (forgiveness). On the whole, the Jain ethical code of conduct has tended to steer its followers towards rational thinking regarding certain social customs such as *Sati* and *Shraddha*. It also discourages superstitions such as worshipping certain deities for getting cured of diseases, and/or restoring good health. Again, another characteristic feature of Jainism is the common code of conduct for its ascetics and laymen or laywomen. This perhaps has been an important factor in the survival of Jainism for so long even in the face of adverse political conditions.

Next to philosophy and religion, the contribution to languages and literature by the Jains is quite remarkable (Winternitz 1946). The Jain literature includes a vast body of non-canonical works, poetical narratives (*Puranas, Charitras, Kathas, prabandhas, kavyas and mahakavyas*, etc) and scientific and technical literature pertaining to astronomy, astrology, cosmology, mathematics, geography, economics, grammar, logic, philosophy, poetics, lexicography, etc. Much of this literature which put Shramanic values to the fore emphasizes misery and sufferings in the world (*Samsar*) and the ways to overcome them not through sacrifices and priestly help but through good moral conduct and compassion. Through their writings the Jains have enriched not only the ancient languages such as Sanskrit, Prakrit and Apabhramsa, but also many modern Indian languages, namely, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu. Much of this vast Jain literature continues to be stored in innumerable Jain temples and *Shastra bhandaras*, and remains unclassified and unpublished as yet (Balbir et al. 2006: Bhargava 1968: 226-55; Jain 1991).

Jains' contribution to Indian arts and architecture is no less significant. Their contribution in these fields covers various architectural forms such as temples, cave temples, temple cities, pillars (*manasthambhas*) and towers, sculptures, and a wide variety of paintings, frescoes, and manuscript-illustrations (See Chandra 1949; Nagar 2000). Building temples has been a matter of utmost pride for the Jains. Dilwara Jain temples at Mt. Abu, Ranakpur Jain temples, temples at Khajuraho, ancient cave-temples of Udaigiri and Khandgiri, cave-temples of Ellora, temple cities of Shantrunjaya (Gujarat), Girnar (Gujarat), Sammedshikhar (Bihar), Sonagiri (M.P.), Mudabidri (Karnataka), the Bahubali statue at Shravanbelagola (Karnataka), the *Kirti-Sthambha* at Chittor are some of the best examples of the Jain architecture (See Singhvi and Chopra 2002). Most of these monuments, particularly the temples, had been funded by single wealthy individuals. As temple construction is considered a meritorious act, scores of temples are being built annually by the Jains all over India, in spite of the fact that their heritage monuments are being neglected in the absence of proper funds and management. Needless to say, the Jain heritage, both physical and socio-cultural needs to be appreciated and preserved.

A majority of Jains have always enjoyed relative economic affluence and a high social status due to the fact that they have been traders, merchants, or bankers. A nineteenth century observer went to the extent of claiming that "half the mercantile transactions of India pass through their hands" (Thornton 1898: 40). Be that as it may, the Jains continue to make their mighty contribution to the Indian economy even though the Indian economy itself has undergone a sea-change. The Jains have taken the full advantage of modern education system and a significant number of them have entered into a wide variety of professions and services, besides consolidating their position as trading and commercial petty bourgeoisie in the Indian economy See Jain 2011a). Additionally, the Jains hold quite a substantial amount of ownership in real estate, share-market and mass media and publishing industries. *Rajasthan Patrika* Group, *Lokmat* Group (Maharashtra), *Gujarat Samachar*, *The Times of India* Group and *Mathribhumi* Group (Kerala) are the outstanding examples of mass media ownership by the Jains.

Besides the spread of secular education among the Jains, the 20th century also witnessed the development of Jainology that happened along with Indological studies. With the donations of the Jain community, a large number of Jain Sanskrit *vidyalayas* (schools/colleges) were established in which the intending students studied free of charge subjects like Sanskrit language and literature, grammar, logic and Indian philosophy, in addition to Jain religious texts. In north India this movement was spearheaded in the early decades of the 20th century by Ganesh Pasad Varni, a *Kshullaka* who was instrumental in establishing, directly or indirectly, a number of Sanskrit *vidyalayas* all over north India, including the reputed ones at Varanasi, Arrah, Morena, Jaipur, Hastinapur, Indore, Jabalpur, Katni, Sagar, Mahavirji, Papauraji, Sadhumal, etc See Varni 1948). These *vidyalayas* produced generations of Jain *pandits*, priests, and students who have helped in raising the level of knowledge about Jain philosophy and religion among the Jains.

Until about the 1960s Jains' contribution to the Indian public life in modern times was quite remarkable. With thousands of them serving jail terms and scores of them having sacrificed their lives as martyrs during India's independence movement (Jain 2006), the Jains' political participation was certainly exemplary, which was further sustained by their disproportionately high representation

in the Constituent Assembly of India, and in the first few parliaments and in some state assemblies. It is only during the last four decades that their role in public life has significantly dwindled.

Historically, however, this has not been so. "The Jains, especially in southern and western India, produced a large number of monarchs, ministers and generals" (Sangave 2006: 134). Even the Jain saints were no indifferent to the secular affairs of the country. They were frequently consulted by the kings regarding political matters. In south India "the Jain saints were virtually responsible for the founding of the Ganga kingdom in the 2nd century A.D. and the Hoysala kingdom in the 11th century A.D." (Sangave 2006: 134).

As part of the *Shramanic* value system, Jainism puts a great emphasis on the establishment of egalitarian social order (Nevaskar 1978). Besides social equality, gender equality is an equally important concern for the Jains. Jainism stands for self-reliance, humanism and social welfare. It is often said that there are no beggars and criminals in the Jain community. The Jains run the largest network of philanthropic activities, including schools and hostels, hospitals, dispensaries, birds hospitals, cow-sheds, drinking water facilities, and the non-governmental organisations for disbursement of loans and scholarships for students. It is interesting to note that at least in principle Jainism is open to all irrespective of caste, colour, creed, gender or wealth, though in practice Jains observe all forms of discrimination and exclusion. The Jains do accept the Hindu *Varna Vyavastha*, but only as a system of division of labour, and not in terms of any ascriptive criterion (birth). What is implied here is the fact that the social order is a man-made system, and not a divinely ordained one. This had far reaching impact on the status of Sudras, and also on the institution of slavery. Incidently, the Jainist conception of society is anarchist or atomistic. It accepts the view that the society is the sum total of individuals. The quality of society is determined by the quality of its constituent units. Obviously, this conception of society does not recognize the *sui generis* (self-dependent) property of society.

The contribution of Jainism to the Indian socio-cultural value system is subtle and diffused yet quite significant. The five *Anubratas* of which *Ahimsa* has become synonymous to Jainism constitute the core of this value system. The Jainist concern of *Ahimsa*

extends from controlling individual passions to managing inter-personal and family relations, to inter-group tolerance, to maintaining world peace, and to preserving ecological balance and sustainability (See Amar 2009). Vegetarianism is the most manifest expression of Jainist concern to *Ahimsa*. So much so that the overwhelming majority of Jains not only "rigidly abstain from eating non-vegetarian food and intoxicants, some of them even avoid eating roots and tubers like potatoes, onions, garlic, radish and carrot, while many renounce supper and avoid the use of honey and stale butter because they are afraid of destroying living creatures in the bargain" (Singh 1998: 1330). For the same reason, most Jains drink only strained water, and avoid eating after sunset.

Mahatma Gandhi's *Satyagraha* in South Africa and India and its impact on the racial equality movement of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the U.S. are some of the successful political applications of *Ahimsa* (Hay 1979). Therefore, it was highly appropriate that 2nd October, the birth day of Mahatma Gandhi, should have been celebrated as the World *Ahimsa* Day by the United Nations.

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